JUDAS ISCARIOT

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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JUDAS ISCARIOT

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

JUDAS ISCARIOT

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BY THE REV.

JAMES W. T. HART, M.A.

'Those that Thou gavest me I have kept,
And none of them is lost,
Save the son of perdition'

St John xvii, 12

LONDON

KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, & CO., 1 PATERNOSTER SQUARE

1884

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PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH many incidents which occur in the life of Christ are necessarily touched upon in this book, yet the reader will at once see from its title that it is by no means intended to take its place among the several 'Lives,' 'Studies,' and 'Histories of Jesus Christ' which are already numerous. It is a book upon the character and motives of the False Apostle, not those of his Master. Numerous events and narratives, therefore, which occur in the Gospels receive no notice in the following pages, as not directly bearing upon the problem treated of in them. For instance, the author has, of course, omitted any mention of the

Transfiguration, for the simple reason that Judas Iscariot never knew anything of it. Christ's words to the three Apostles who were present at the time (St. Peter, St. James, and St. John), were: 'Tell the vision to no man *until* the Son of Man be risen from the dead.' By the time that that prohibition was removed the 'Man of Kerioth' had put an end to the life which he could no longer endure.

The character of Judas has been keenly debated by theologians, and with the result of varying judgments. Some see in him an almost complete incarnation of evil, pursuing a course of fiendish and appalling crime, with no compunction until his last hour. Others have been more disposed to take into account that 'iron force of circumstance' which plays so large a part in the lives of the best and worst men. This book is an attempt to solve the question: 'What was the motive which induced Judas to betray his master?' Was it revenge for disappointed hopes, or simple

avarice, which ultimately fell far short of its expectations? Was it long-planned wickedness, or sudden impulse, or the seeking his own personal safety? These questions possess a deep interest. How far the writer has succeeded in finding their solution the reader must be judge.

It may fairly be assumed, however, by way of premiss, that no man ever reached the highest point of excellence, or sank to the lowest depth of degradation—suddenly. The final development of either may appear to be sudden, but it is not so in reality. The causes which led up to the crisis had been surely, although perhaps slowly and almost imperceptibly, maturing. That 'iron force of circumstance' already alluded to; the man's own natural temperament; his correct estimate of present and future events, or on the contrary, his wholly erroneous views of them; all these, with other factors, largely assist in bringing about the culminating moment of his life. One

need be no Fatalist or Pessimist to hold this belief, which simply forces itself upon one, by the unanswerable logic of facts, in studying and forming a judgment upon any man's life, famous or obscure, historical or actual.

It must be admitted that the materials for such a study of the life of Judas are few. The Gospels contain only some fourteen direct notices of him. But a careful apprehension of these, and a diligent comparison of them with the rest of the events of Christ's life, will result in the discovery of much ground for reasonable inference. Imagination must supply the rest. And it has the great advantage of presenting a solution of the question proposed in a more attractive form than an essay, or strictly theological treatise.

But while freely using the imaginative element, the writer has endeavoured to avoid representing Christ as uttering words of which there is no record in the Gospels. The natural feeling of reverence would alone urge this

course. Even the promise to the disciples (see page 28) is hardly an exception to this rule. That promise is mentioned by St. Matthew (xix. 28), and by St. Luke (xxii. 29, 30). It was a promise given on two entirely different occasions: at two widely separated times of the ministry. The second declaration was evidently a reiteration or reminder of the first. The author has ventured to regard it as a part of the *formal* call of the Apostles, who were certainly not chosen for the first time on the Mount of Beatitudes. There cannot be a doubt that Judas Iscariot shared the mistake of his brother Apostles in their interpretation of that promise, and his bitter disappointment on discovering his error had much to do with his treacherous resolve.[1]

This obligation of strict accuracy is not so imperative in the case of the Apostles. A greater amount of freedom is permissible, and

[1] See Dean Plumptre's note on St. Matt. xix. 28.—*New Testament Commentary for English Readers*, ed. Bp. Ellicott.

has been freely used, in depicting scenes, actions, and conversations in which they are concerned.

An undisputed Harmony of the Gospels is now generally admitted to be unattainable, but we can follow the life of Christ in a fairly accurate order, and that is sufficient to excuse such slight deviations as the reader may detect from any one of the many Harmonies extant.

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'WHAT is the guilt in which the traitor has involved himself?

'Most assuredly he sinned *as man against the Son of Man, and without that dogmatic knowledge of His being the Son of God which the Spirit gave afterwards.* . . . . But he had resisted the truth, as hypocrite: love only hardened him: from a chosen and trusted one he becomes a traitor: delivers his Lord and Master over to the enemies who sought His death.

'In the holiness of the God-Man there was nothing which might furnish excuse; as in the case of man's sinning against sinful man: his hatred of love thereby passes over from the human limit to the devilish.'—STIER, *Words of the Lord Jesus*, vol. vii. pp. 60–1 (English Translation).

JUDAS ISCARIOT.

CHAPTER I.

AT KERIOTH.

THE days pass into weeks, the weeks into months, the months enlarge themselves into years, and still the same unvarying current of my life flows on. Nothing to change its monotony; ever the same.

As each day breaks, I rise to till and tend my vineyards. *They* supply all the wants of my simple neighbours, so far as occupation is concerned. What do Hananiah and Eliab, and the rest, care for our national hope—our country's freedom from the yoke of Rome? The weather, the market at Hebron, the simple family events of our little village, are all suffi-

cient in their eyes. But these are not enough for me. I long for power, I thirst for riches; but no opening comes. For Rome I care but little; she might rule and welcome, were it not for the tribute money. Nor does any scruple cross my mind when yielding that to the publican. My namesake of Galilee was a fool, if he indeed raised the standard of revolt from the motive he professed. 'Shall Israel's sons be such cowards as to pay tribute to Romans?' he cried. 'Shall we, after God, submit to any mortal man for lord?' Why not? We can worship just the same (those who care to worship), and if trade flourish, peace prevail and wealth increase, what matters it to men of worldly wisdom? We are scarce fit to rule ourselves. Leave us in peace, every man under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, and make the tribute light; then I, for one, would smile at those restless spirits, who prefer death and failure to comfort and prosperity.

And yet, could I be sure of victory, and still more sure of the rewards which victory brings, I, too, could dare as much as he. It is because I know full well how strong is Rome that I sub-

mit. But if my Gaulonite namesake had deeper ends in view, aims for *himself*, then I cease to scorn him. Great, great indeed, would be his prize, who could lead forth our people against the eagles of Rome, and lead them out to conquest. For him who broke her chain, what place of power! what lavish wealth! His every wish might be fulfilled. Ah, yes, for such substantial crowns as those a man might stake his lands, his life—yes, even the life to come.

For, after all, I doubt the Pharisees, with their belief in a resurrection. They cannot prove what they declare, and reason seems against it. It may be so; we cannot tell. But let the opening come for which I watch and wait, and then the veriest Sadducee, with his 'no angel, no resurrection,' would not make surer of what this life, at least, can give than would I.

And will that opening come? I cannot see it yet. For twenty years I have lived and laboured here in Kerioth, and all that I have done is to find the means of living, and lay by a little store. Early and late have I toiled at my vineyards, and striven to make myself a

place among the men of our little town; but with no success. Bad vintages, falling markets, have all seemed to conspire against me. But courage yet. Should next week's sales at Hebron still be poor, then I will carry out that idea which has often come to me. I will sell my father's vineyards which he left to me, his only son. We do not like such sales, 'tis true; we think that land should always pass from father to son, and keep in the family. But what care I? There are many who will buy; and the price I will take with me northward to the Sea of Galilee. They say the fishing companies there are doing well. I will join one, and see if there is not better fortune in the waters of Galilee than in the land of Judea. A man like I, who know the wisdom of the world, why should I not rise to become the master of a whole fleet of fishing craft? There would be the fulfilling of one hope, if not the other, of power. And that might come. For if power does not always bring wealth, at least wealth can almost always command power.

So be it then: my resolve is taken. Next

week will I depart for Galilee. In that quiet land, of which I have heard so much, I may have time to think out any plans which may come before me, any schemes that may promise well for rank or gold. The country is fair and peaceful. No Messiah will call the people around him there, after the fate of Judas of Gamala. No King of the Jews is likely to take Capernaum or Nazareth for his royal city, disturbing the peace, checking trade, raising a new religious sect. Better so; we have enough of those last already. Pharisee, Sadducee, Essene, Scribes, Lawyers, Zealots, I am weary of them; nor can they offer much to any disciple. Let them devour each other, while such as I, wiser in our generation, reap the harvest they pass by. One thing the Sadducees rightly teach, I hold: the absolute freedom of man's will and action, excluding all Divine interference in the affairs of this world. Let the weak-minded, superstitious dreamer lengthen out his prayers, the man of action will bend events to his own will.

And yet—I did not think I had such weakness left—I shall be sorry for poor Naomi.

The gentle girl, how fair she is, how good; and she loves me! Yes, even me. For what is there in Judas of Kerioth to inspire any Jewish damsel with affection? Nothing. I am not comely, I know it; the clear stream gives back the image of a harsh, stern face, red hair, and piercing eyes. I am not gentle of speech, smooth in manner; I cannot be like such. Yet I know well why Naomi loves even me: for her aged father's sake. He could not pay the lawful debt he owed me. Well, I might have taken him before the court; still he had nought to pay. And at least I am not cruel when nothing is to be gained. So I released his debt, and even sent him food and wine till the fever left him. I scarce know why. I wondered as I did it; but Naomi could not repay me sufficiently with grateful thanks and tears. She has shown too plainly to mistake how well she loves her father's saviour, as she calls me. But I cannot love her; the love of woman is too low a prize for me. The talents of gold, the obedience of men, are my desire. So, though I pity her, I go, and in the north will I seek my lifelong aims.

Farewell, a little while, my friendly roll. It is a relief to me to seek thee night after night, and inscribe on thee my hopes, my thoughts, my fears. Thou art better than a friend, for thou receivest all my inmost mind as he might do, and upbraidest not as perchance he might. Farewell a while; thou shalt be unfolded next by the shores of Galilee's fair lake. What shall I commit to thy faithful record there, I wonder. The time will show. May it be for my advancement and my gain.

CHAPTER II.

BY THE SEA OF TIBERIAS.

THREE short weeks have passed since I left Kerioth. Neither has my success as yet been equal to my hopes. No man would hire me at first. I had forgotten that I knew nothing of the sea, or ships, or fishing gear; but at last I found employment with James, son of Zebedee, on board one of his father's boats. Well, patience. I must be content to begin in a lowly way; but I will surely rise.

What a change from Kerioth and Hebron! Rocky hills and ravines there, with only scattered patches of earth in places, where we tended with much care and anxiety our little vineyards. Here, how beautiful it all is! I had often heard of the loveliness of this inland sea, or lake; and, in truth, it is as fair, and more so, than all I heard. This little town of

Capernaum, where I lodge, might be our father Adam's paradise. The fields are green as emeralds, the song of brightly-feathered birds resounds, the shrubs grow tall and fragrant. Capernaum itself lies on the rise of hills which slope down to the water's edge. Calm and clear those waters lie, but James, my master, tells me they are treacherous. Between the ravines which divide the hills surrounding the lake, sudden and fierce storms rush down, he says, and ships sometimes are swamped with the high waves thus raised.

The lake itself is some four leagues long and two broad. It swarms with fish, and I wonder not that so many live by this trade. Not only does the lake send fish to Capernaum, Dalmanutha, Magdala, Bethsaida, and imperial Tiberias—all on its banks—but also to Gergesa, Hippos, Chorazin, and many other towns, but a little way inland. We usually fish at night, and rest through the early part of the day. That, too, is strange to me, so different to the life I hitherto have lived.

The memories of Judas of Gamala, and Sadoc the Pharisee, still linger here, I find.

They even say that Judas is alive, but hiding from the face of men. No marvel for that. The stern, resistless power of Coponius soon crushed that rising ; and Herod Antipas's palace, rising almost from the lake itself, is a menacing warning of the strength of Rome. Often I see her war-galleys flash past us as we lie at anchor, the dazzling rays of the sun reflected from the glittering shields; and Herod knows full well from whom he holds his crown. Why else did he, in fulsome adoration, name his city 'Tiberias.'

I like my master, James ; he seems a wise, thoughtful man. Something impetuous ; for when I was slow to learn at first, his impatience more than once broke forth. But he does not keep his wrath. His brother John I hate ; yet others love him. True, he is gentle and affectionate, quiet and reserved ; though once I thought I saw his passion rise, like unto his brother; but he veiled it, and turned away. Why then do I hate him? Because I see he shrinks from me, I know not why. He seems to read me closely, and discern my mind. I cannot quarrel with him, for he might whisper

to his brother to dismiss me. But the days may come when John of Galilee shall learn that Judas of Kerioth is a dangerous foe.

There is a boat which sails in company with ours, owned by Simon and Andrew, sons of Jona. Some bond stronger than mere partnership seems to bind them close in union with my master and his brother. Five nights ago, as our ships lay side by side, I heard all four speaking earnestly together. I caught but few of their words, nor did I care to listen, for it was concerning some new school of doctrine and its teacher. Such matters interest me little, and least of all just then ; for our net felt heavy, and I, with the other servants, were hard at work hauling it into the ship. And yet, all the while, James and John, Simon and Andrew, discoursed eagerly, and paid no heed to their good fortune. When at last we separated, and sailed to shore with the light breeze just springing up, I heard the words, ' He will be here to-morrow.' But I thought no more of it, for at that moment I caught sight of the snow-clad summit of Hermon far in the north, and the full moon cast a silvery gleam on its whitened

shoulder. Very beautiful it was, and I gazed on it till we rounded a point, and losing it behind the hill, ran alongside the sandy beach of Capernaum.

Yesterday, when I rose, the sun was high and I hurried down to the boats. But instead of finding myself late, as I had feared, there was no one there except the boy Ephraim.

'Where are they, my son?' I asked him.

'In the town,' he replied; 'but I know not why. I cannot think what hath possessed our masters, James and John. They care not for the fishery, as of old, and have more than once drawn on them the wrath of their father, Zebedee. For that they seemed grieved, and worked more closely afterwards; but should he come now and find them gone, he would rage against them fiercely. I would they were here.'

But they did not come, and all we could do was to make ready for them when they should arrive. I washed the nets and cleaned the boat, then sat down beneath the shade of the half-hoisted sail. Presently, from one of the streets leading down to the lake, I saw a crowd approaching. At its head walked one whom I

had never seen, and as he drew near I looked at him with some faint curiosity. He was tall, and grave in aspect; his countenance was sweet to look upon, yet somewhat sad; his hair was long and flowed upon his shoulders, in colour like dark wine. Behind him came the crowd, foremost among them Simon, Andrew, my master, and John. Straight towards the boat the stranger came, to the very edge of the water; and taking his stand on a low flat rock, seemed about to address the crowd, which now gathered closely around him. But changing his purpose, he turned to Simon, and requested leave to enter his boat to speak to the people from it. Right gladly was his wish granted, and as the throng pressed forward he began to preach. Simon and Andrew had followed him, and while listening to his words, were silently clearing their nets from the weeds and stones which still clung to the meshes from last night's work.

I cannot now remember all he said, but I listened with surprise. Never had I heard such pure and holy teaching. The multitude stood silent as dumb men, while he bade them love

the truth, repent them of their sin, and love the brethren. 'For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,' he said.

'Who is it?' I whispered in astonishment to James.

'Do you not know?' he answered. 'It is the Holy Prophet, Jesus of Nazareth.'

CHAPTER III.

THE DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

THE name was strange to me. It was not known in Kerioth, and during the three weeks I had been here I had never heard it. True, a story had reached my ears of a marriage feast at Cana, where some kindly guest had supplied a deficiency of wine at his own cost, to spare shame to the poverty of the bridegroom and his bride. But I gave it no second thought, the more so because one version of the story was that a miracle had been wrought by the liberal giver. That was enough to discredit it, I knew. Miracles! the high priest himself has not such power. They belong to the days gone by: the times of Moses, Elijah, and the prophets.

I had heard, too, of a tumult in a synagogue of Nazareth, where the reader had stirred up the rage of those assembled, and they sought

his life. They said it was the same one—the wedding-guest of Cana. It mattered not to me.

But now these tales came back upon my mind, nor could I help associating them with this wondrous teacher. Was it indeed he? And if so, why did they seek his life? I had not much time for further thought. He had ended his discourse, and sat for a moment silent; then, as he glanced around, he noticed Simon and Andrew laying aside their nets for the day, till the night hour for the fishing came again.

Then, standing up, he said to them, 'Launch out into the deep, and lower your nets for a draught.'

The elder son of Jona looked up with surprise, and hesitated for a moment. The others were astonished too. What, now! when the sun poured down his burning rays, and the fish, we knew, had left the heated surface water. I smiled at the seeming ignorance of the landsman. Then Simon answered him.

'Master, we have toiled all night and taken nothing.' And it was true.

The prophet spoke no word in reply, but

slightly motioned with his hand towards the deep.

'Nevertheless, at thy command, I will let down the net,' continued Simon ; and, beckoning to the other servants of our two ships, who were standing near, we took our oars, for no breath of wind stirred the bosom of the sea, and rowed out, the prophet seated in the other ship.

Some half mile from the shore we paused, and Simon looked towards this Jesus, who bowed his head in assent. Then we lowered our nets, not the great drag net, taking many men to work it, but four bag nets, one from our vessel, three from theirs. A minute passed, and nothing happened, as the boy Ephraim slowly impelled us along, dragging the net after us. Then suddenly I felt a strain ; it grew more powerful, and James and John hurried to my help. Scarce could our united efforts haul it over the side, so weighty was its load, and the net was breaking. I had little time for astonished words, however, for we were startled by a shout from Andrew. We looked up, and saw that their success was even greater than

our own. Not all their strength could drag their own nets in, and their boat was almost drawn under water on one side. At once we rowed up to them, coming round on their further side, and clambered in, leaving only Ephraim in ours. Then we trimmed their vessel by carrying round the rope of one net to the other side, and another to the stern. This equalised the weight, and with much labour we pulled in two nets, which so filled us with their great contents that we were forced to return to our own boat and take their third net in with ours.

Then, when all was done, we rowed slowly to the beach. So nearly level with the water's edge we were, that I was glad when our keels grated on the beach. And, looking towards our friends, lo! Simon cast himself on his knees before the prophet, and with bowed head and clasped hands, cried, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.'

Why should he say so? Why not thank him for his gift? I did not understand. But Jesus of Nazareth only answered, 'Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men!'

They crowded round him, they knelt before him, they kissed the fringes of his robe; and then and there they vowed to follow him henceforth. And he accepted their service, and passed away into the town, they following him.

I stood astonished; I knew not what to do. Then I recollected that the boats must be cleared, and sent Ephraim with a message to Jona and Zebedee. When they arrived I saw at once they knew all that had happened, and had met their sons. They said but little to each other, or to me; but gave the necessary orders, sent to hire new men to take their sons' place, and offered me the post of captain over their two boats. Gladly did I accept; and felt that one rise in life had come. This is the beginning of good fortune; it shall not be my fault if it is the last. I have my store still, almost untouched: the price of my vineyards' sale; it may suffice to purchase me a share in the boats, with a little more added from my earnings in the next few months; that will speedily lead on to a vessel of my own, and then I see my way.

And now let me think carefully over the strange events of yesterday. There are two things to mark—that wonderful haul of fish, and the conduct of the sons of Jona and Zebedee.

Was the first event indeed a miracle? Is this new teacher endowed with power from on high?

It seems as if it must be so. Who could have thought, who could have known, that our venture would be rewarded with such marvellous success? We ply our trade by night, for then we know the fish come nearest to the surface of the lake. In the daytime they sink low, and keep near the bottom, in the cooler water. Did some mysterious power compel them to come near us, or did a higher wisdom than ours know that they were there, against the fisherman's experience and acquaintance with their habits?

If it was, in truth, that last, then it was no miracle. With the spiritual knowledge which a real prophet has, or had, in days of old, he might have easily discerned some signs of their presence, unknown to us. And then,

surely, the mighty gift of miracles has ceased. Among my Kerioth vineyards I heard often of John, son of Zacharias, and his labours by the river Jordan. I did not join the multitudes who went to hear and see him. I cared not to go; but many from our village went, and came back with wonder and touched hearts. Nay, some returned and changed their lives, so that we scarce knew them for the same. Those gave alms who never had given them before, except with churlish and unwilling souls. But all agreed in one report. This John the Baptist, as they named him; this man, to whom the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Scribes and lawyers went in deputation, worked no miracle. His fiery spirit, his burning words were his only power. He did no miracle!

And is this Jesus greater than he? I cannot think it. Looking far out to sea, he may have seen some signs we did not notice; some ripple on the still, calm water, telling of the shoal beneath; some clouding of the clear, bright lake, showing the presence of the fish close below. It may have been. And unless I see more wondrous signs wrought by him,

I must doubt it being a miracle in truth and deed. Yet still one thought remains from all this—he may come again, and once more teach from the seashore; how gladly shall he have my boat; nay, I will offer it; for I see how well he rewards those who do him kindness.

And then the sons of Jona and Zebedee. To follow him, and leave their trade, and hopes in life. I did not think that men could be such fools. He teaches well, and I myself would like again to hear him speak. But to give up all, their shares now, their fathers' goods which would come to them in time; this is a marvel. They knew him before, because I heard them speak of one whom now I know was he. What was the power which drew them? 'Fishers of men,' he said. What could that mean? Surely nothing else but to teach his doctrines, good as they are, and to make many new disciples of his school. That is not what I covet. 'Fishers of men;' yes, to be their master; to receive their homage; to command them. But I think that is not what the prophet means. He looks not like it. Well, I shall see them again

with him, and then I may learn more. Meantime their deed has served me well ; for instead of a hired helper I am captain. This Jesus must offer solid gains to draw me from my newly-won command. I am not one to drop the substance, only to grasp the shadow. And now I write no more to-night.

CHAPTER IV.

DISCIPLESHIP.

'BOAST not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth,' wrote our great king, Solomon the mighty. Not one, no not one, of the many thousand proverbs which he spake had in it deeper truth, more knowledge of the world and men. I, Judas of Kerioth; I, the practical, worldly-wise Judæan, to become a disciple of the lowly Jesus of Nazareth; I who mocked the sons of Jona and Zebedee; to do as they have done, and follow him. Scarce can I believe it now, and yet the marvel is that I have done so; of my own free will, against the urgings of my wiser nature. What power is this which dwells in the Galilean prophet? Throughout the length and breadth of Palestine I would have thought not one was more unlikely than myself to join his little band.

For I, too, have left my new masters. Two short days saw me captain of their boats, and on the third I left them. I have given up my new promotion ; have resigned all future hopes ; only my little store remains safe in the hands of Æneas, the Roman usurer of Capernaum. Small interest doth he allow me for its use ; yet it is safe with him, I think, and I can claim it when I will. But let me now recall the past, and in the silence of my humble room look back upon my deed, strangest of all to myself.

Two days went by, and I had worked hard at my new duties. I rose early and retired late ; I saw that everything went well ; Jona and Zebedee were satisfied ; and I had had good fortune on the lake. The third morning, as we came to shore, I saw Andrew standing there, and as we landed he came up to me.

'Judas,' he said, 'the master calleth thee. He hath sent me to bring thee to him now.'

I knew well whom he meant. 'He calleth *me*!' I said, in great surprise.

'Yes, even thee,' he answered. 'Why—I may not say—perchance to speak with thee. I do not know.'

'I cannot come just now,' I said to him. 'My masters would not suffer me; not till the boats are clear, and all is ready for the work to-night.'

'Then come in three hours' time,' said Andrew. 'Come unto Hattîn; thou wilt find him there.' He left me, and I wondered at the smile, so full of meaning, with which he turned away.

Then when my work was done I went in search of Jona, and obtained leave. Towards the little village of Hattîn I bent my steps, musing much as I walked. That the prophet would seek *me* for a disciple did once cross my mind, but only to reject the thought next instant.

Near to the village I met Andrew watching for me. 'Thou hast done well to come,' was all he said; and then conducted me to a house a little apart from the rest.

Entering a room I found there, in assembly, Simon, James, and John, with seven others, whom I knew not; but Jesus of Nazareth was not there. They greeted me with friendly

faces, and placed food before me. Then Simon spoke.

'Our master is not here; but soon he will be. He hath wished to see thee, Judas, and to speak with thee.'

'What can the prophet want with me?' I asked. 'He is a good and holy man, and teacheth well; but that he asks for me is strange.'

'Wait, and thou wilt know,' Simon replied. And scarcely had he spoken when Jesus entered.

'Come with me,' was all he said. And rising we followed him in silence through the village and to the mountain—'Horns of Hattîn.' As we passed through the village a crowd began to assemble and to follow us; and then I saw he was well known. Up the slope of the hill-side we pressed, the crowd increasing in number. I could see many coming in the distance, from every quarter, and gathering near. Then Andrew whispered me: 'We were sent yesterday to tell the people that the prophet would teach them to-day from this

spot. And see, they come in hundreds to hear.'

I said nothing, but I marvelled silently. At last some half-way up the mountain-side, he paused, and motioned back the multitude. The others, whom I had seen in the house, drew near to him, and, uncertain what to do, I stood a little way apart.

Then Jesus spake to the eleven. He desired them to follow him henceforth, to become his disciples, to preach the kingdom of God, to share his labours. He told them he had prayed long and earnestly for them to his Father. 'Abide with me,' he said, 'continue in my love. And ye who shall follow me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory; ye also shall sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'

How grand a promise; how splendid a reward. A throne; a princedom. My ambition fired as I heard the words; I doubted not an instant of their truth. My brain almost reeled under the brilliant prospect. Yes, one must stoop to rise. I saw it all. How many a king has risen from a lowly post; but then, alas!

those words were not for me. To the eleven he had spoken them. Yet might I join their band? Quickly my resolve was taken. Farewell the lake of Galilee; farewell the fisher's trade. Blessed be the day when I left Judea and came north, to seek new ways to fortune. One moment more (for all this passed in the briefest space through my mind, far more rapidly than I have writ it down) and my knee would have bowed in homage to him; my lips would have craved to take his service.

But he turned. He looked towards me. For a second of time he seemed to hesitate; he paused as if uncertain. A shade of doubt appeared to rest upon his brow. Then he sighed, and beckoning me he gravely said: '*And thou, too!*'

Then I advanced to him, and knelt before him. He raised me, and looking steadfastly into my face went on:

'And every one that hath forsaken brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, or houses, for my name's sake: shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life.

'But many shall be last, that are first; and first, that are last.'

The crowd had now gathered in vast numbers near, and what a crowd it was. Not only a gathering of men, women, and children, but of sick, lame, paralytics, and many other infirmities of our poor human frames. And marvel upon marvel, this Son of Man, as he had named himself, now showed what power he held indeed. He moved among them as a Son of the Most High; the lame walked at his word, the sick rose up in perfect health and strength, the palsied found their limbs restored. We stood and gazed in wonderment. The miracle of the draught of fishes flashed back upon my thoughts, and I no longer doubted. He who had such power over sickness and disease, might well have 'dominion over the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the sea,' as saith David in Psalm viii. But now he had ended his works of love, and coming back to the level spot on the hill-side where he had left us, he sat down, and we around him. The multitude encircled us, pressing closely to hear.

Then in the perfect stillness which prevailed he spake to us.

Would that I could remember all. I cannot write a tenth of what we heard. He speaks from God, the Father of our chosen race; no other man could speak like him, if he were not inspired. He told us who were truly blessed in God's sight: the poor in spirit, the meek, the mourners for sin and sorrow, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and they who hunger and thirst for righteousness. He bade us be the light and salt of the world; he showed us how, by fulfilling the Law of Moses as I had never dreamed of before. 'For I am not come to destroy the Law,' he said, 'but to fulfil it.' And then he taught us what the Psalmist meant—'I see that Thy commandment is *exceeding broad*.' For on the law of adultery, murder, oaths, revenge, he showed us many new and startling truths. He spoke of prayer, almsgiving, fasting, all to be done in secret, from the love and fear of God, and not from love of praise as do our teachers now. He taught us charity in dealing with others, and to amend our own

faults first. He prophesied that many should be rejected at the last great day, though they had taught in his name and wrought his works, because their heart was still impure (may I be kept from that). And last, he likened those who heard his words and did them, to a house upon a rock, which all the fury of the storm and sea hurt not. But those who heard his words and did them not, were like a house upon the sand, which fell before the waves and wind. And so he ended his discourse.

I know not what the others felt or thought. I bowed my head between my hands and wept. How far above me all this holy teaching was. I saw myself as I truly have been. A poor, selfish, ambitious, earth-bound man. There is a life to come, I see it now, how could I ever have doubted. HE knows it, that is enough. And to do good to others, what blessedness that seems to be, from what he says. I have done little, but I remember now, that though I wondered at myself when I released Naomi's father of his debt to me, and helped him too, that his daughter's passionate gratitude, and the white-haired old man's blessing, stirred my heart, and

made me glad I had yielded to the unaccustomed impulse. Yes, that confirms his words. And so I give myself to him, to be his earnest servant. I will learn from him the happier way. And when the princely throne is mine which he has promised us (for he himself held out that prize), may I not then feel it has been well earned?

The multitude was now dispersing, and we descended the hill. Some who lived in the village followed us, and both they, and we, his new disciples, were soon to receive yet another proof of the authority which supported his words. Right in our path, crouched on the ground, lay one of those loathsome objects, whose very presence creates repulsion, a leper, and one on whom the foul disease had worked its direst effects. Full of leprosy he was, and nigh unto death, I should have deemed. Suddenly he approached us. As suddenly we fell back, and avoided the poor wretch, whose contact was ceremonial pollution. Instinctively we withdrew to each side, and it was not till then, when we deemed ourselves safe, that I looked, and saw Jesus of Nazareth still standing in the

same place. And the leper approached him, drew close to him, and with a piteous cry flung himself down before our master. I was scarce near enough to hear his half-articulate moan, but John, who was somewhat nearer, heard him pray:

'Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.'

I had already seen too much of our master to question his ability for any wondrous work; but I waited the result with some anxiety. But neither I nor all who saw waited long. Without a moment's pause the prophet stooped, and laying his hand upon that wretched head as if in gentle blessing, said in tone of deepest compassion:

'I will. Be thou clean.'

What a change! Up sprang the man, so different that we scarce knew him for the same. True, his rags still clung around him, and his whole aspect showed the lowest poverty; but he was healed; even as Naaman the Syrian, in the far-off years, bathing in Jordan's stream. Only here was a mightier hand at work; for Elisha did it by power from God, whereas this

healer seemed to work in his own strength, even like the teaching we had just heard—not as the teaching of men, learned from each other, handed down, but, as it were, *his own*!

Then Jesus spake again, checking the burst of incoherent thanks which flowed from the man's lips, and said, 'See thou tell no man, but go and show thyself unto the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.' And he departed.

When we joined our master again, Simon ventured to ask why this command of silence had been given. He answered, 'They will seek after me, only to see signs and wonders.' I pondered much over this reply; it did not appear sufficient; but I gave up further conjecture, and soon after we reached the village. There we separated, some going with him to the house where I met my brother disciples in the morning, and others of us, including myself, finding a kindly welcome in the habitation of Simon Zelotes, one of our band, and whose dwelling was at Hattîn.

And now before I fold thee up, my secret friend, let me speak truly to myself on thee.

What was it that so changed me of a sudden? I grant it was, that he first spoke of thrones, and promised them to those who followed him. And still I think of that. There is no harm, I trow, in waiting for a fair reward. But afterwards, his teaching on the Mount, *that* moved my heart. I remember the words of Ezekiel, which I often heard read in the synagogue: 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.' That hath been fulfilled in me. I feel the new heart, with higher aims than I had ever before. I am conscious of the new spirit, with nobler wishes than I thought I could experience. And I will be his faithful servant and disciple, loving, following, obeying him unto the end.

CHAPTER V.

'GREATER WONDERS THAN THESE.'

NOTHING has happened to-day worthy of special note. Our master left us in the morning; he did not wish our company. Alone upon the mountains he was wandering hither and thither. He returned at night, looking weary; and I heard John say to Simon that he knew how Jesus had spent the day—in long hours of prayer and meditation.

I sent messages yesterday evening to my masters, Jona and Zebedee. I told them of my new resolve. I thanked them for their kindness in appointing me, and prayed them to forgive my leaving them so suddenly. They sent no word back in reply, and the messenger said they only smiled in scorn. Be it so; it is no more than I felt towards James and John, and I cannot feel surprise.

I have learned something more of my companions. The sons of my late masters I knew already, the brothers Simon and Andrew, and the brothers James and John. Then there is Philip of Bethsaida, a fisher youth like them. He it was, I hear, who brought to Jesus the grave, thoughtful man who seldom speaks, Nathanael, son of Tolmai, from Cana. Simon the Zealot is another, a man of quick, impulsive temperament; he hates the Roman sway, and would give his own life cheerfully to free our country from their power. One bears the same name as myself, Judas, but they call him also Lebbaeus, the warm-hearted; he is young, and they seem to love him for his clinging, affectionate nature. He has two brothers, also disciples of our master. Levi, or Matthew (for he is called indifferently by both names), only a short time ago a publican. They tell me Levi left his profitable trade at one short word from Jesus. The third brother of the three is James, not the son of Zebedee, but of Alphaeus. And, lastly, there is Thomas, also called 'the Twin.'

How strange to find two such widely differing characters in one brotherhood as Simon the

Zealot and Levi the ex-publican. The first, hating the tribute payment, the second, only lately collecting it; the one detesting our Imperial masters and ready to rise against them, the other, until very recently, willing to be their hated officer. It seems to show the uniting power of Jesus the prophet.

We leave this place to-morrow. John brought in word of what I feared.

'The few who saw him heal the leprous man have spread the tale,' he said. 'Our master laid his hand upon the sufferer's head; and the people now say he must submit to be without the village for a while, then purify himself, and bring the offering. He is great, they allow; but not greater than the Law of Moses.'

'What doth he say himself?' asked James, the son of Alphaeus.

'I have told him,' answered John, 'and he replied he is content to leave here for a time. To-morrow we shall go unto Capernaum.'

I did not like the news; I did not think I should see Capernaum again so soon, and those I left there. Perhaps be pointed at, and mocked, as one who had flung away his chance

of rising in the world, for a mere idea: a visionary, false enthusiasm. Such they would think my conduct; nay, so had I thought myself not long ago. But courage, Judas! Is a smile, a jeer, to shake thee from thy new allegiance? Canst thou not stand the laugh, the sneer of men? Dost not thou really love and look up to this Rabbi come from God? And—and—is there not a throne in view?

. . . . . .

I am beginning to feel little marvel at his power now; it is not that I think slightingly of it, because I see it often manifested; it is not that: it is because I feel he can do anything he wills—at least with sickness and disease. Yesterday he wrought a wonder greater than any we have yet beheld. I must record it, as I will do—anything of note that shall happen during my discipleship. In years to come, when the work is ended, and the reward given; when toil is done, and rest upon our laurels is gained, it may interest me to look back upon this history. Aye, and it may become widely known; and, perchance, wherever the name of the Galilean prophet is honoured,

the name of Judas of Kerioth may be well known too.

We had scarce reached Capernaum when we saw three of the venerable Rabbis of the Jews coming towards us. When near our master they halted, and did reverence. Then the foremost spake, it seemed as if with hesitation, and yet with earnest desire:

'Rabbi, we come to thee with a request. The centurion of the Capernaum guard hath a slave, who is very dear to him, paralysed with sharpest pains. His master, so unlike many Roman lords, grieves to see his young bond-servant suffer. He prayeth thee to heal him, and hath asked us to plead with thee; and we urge his prayer, for he is right worthy; he hath been kind to us; and though he worships not as we do, yet hath he done a generous act. At his own cost he built the western synagogue, which standeth near the lake; and a goodly building it is, enriched with ornaments of price. He is charitable also to our poor, and we would gladly do him this favour in return, through thee. Master, we pray thee, heal his slave.'

I was standing near to Simon Zelotes, and

saw his face flush red with anger. So bitterly does he hate all that concerns the alien power, that I felt if it rested with him he would spurn our elders for bringing such a prayer, upbraid them with their want of patriotism, and send a stern refusal to the Roman. And I myself waited with some curiosity to see what Jesus would do, though I thought he would assent; and truly the answer came so:

'I will come and heal him.'

Then we passed on, the elders showing the way. But when some distance from the house, although within sight of it, lo! a messenger issued forth, as though he had been watching for us. It was a soldier of the band. He came to the prophet, and, giving him the salute, said:

'I have a message for the master. My captain says, "Lord, trouble not thyself to come. Nor am I worthy that one such as thou art shouldest enter under my roof; for as I am also one who hath authority, and say to my men, 'Go hither,' and he goes, or 'Do this,' and it is done, so do Thou but speak the word, and my slave shall be healed."'

I looked at our master. He stood still with surprise. He gazed around, and, speaking to the elders, said with earnestness of voice and gesture :

'Verily, I say to you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel; and I say also unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

There was a murmur from the elders, and I saw plainly they did not like these words; but unheeding it, Jesus spake again to the soldier, 'Go thy way, and say unto thy master, "As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee."' And the soldier went his way, the Rabbis left us too, with less respect than they had shown before, and we passed into Simon's house.

It is not my wont to converse much. I am one of the silent members of our band. He who speaks often and unreservedly will do himself more harm than good. The wise man

will be slow to speak, but all the more observant and reflective. Therefore, I said little to the others, who have since talked much of the strange words we heard to-day. If I interpret them aright, small wonder that the elders felt aggrieved. 'The children of the kingdom'—those must be the Jews, our honoured race. And are *they* to be cast out? Why, wherefore? What have we done, or shall hereafter do? I cannot understand the saying. But even if it is to be fulfilled, surely not *all*? There will be a remnant left, who shall enter that kingdom of blessedness with the patriarchs. Perhaps our master may explain his saying afterwards. We must wait and see; but I cannot help the thought that it was foolish so to speak to them. Why raise a prejudice against himself so soon? His words will spread, they will be talked of, far and wide. Even if they are true, and spoken by his prophetic insight, still, *need* they have been uttered now? Truth is a noble thing, but it may sometimes be unwise to say it out. Would it not have been more prudent to refrain to-day? I like not indiscretion!

Returning to the miracle itself; there was

something new in it, which I have not seen before. Hitherto, he hath healed them by his word and touch, now by his word alone. We were some distance from the sufferer; he was out of sight. Yet an hour afterwards came the sure news that he was cured, and had risen from his bed of sickness. Where will this power end? Where can its limits be? To raise one from the point of death; yes, very wonderful, but surely it can go no farther? To call back the life into a corpse—that must be beyond his might, one would think. Our records tell us that Elijah and Elisha each raised a child from the sleep of death, amongst their other marvellous works. But—and never did I dare to breathe this thought to any man: only to thee, my faithful, silent, friendly roll, would I confide it—I have always gravely doubted those two tales. Death is the one great conqueror: with death one *cannot* fight successfully. His stroke is final and decisive—one which cannot be gainsayed, and the ruin which it works can never be repaired. So must I think. As for the story written in our Second Book of Kings, how the dead man was lowered into Elisha's

grave ; how when the body touched the bones of the prophet it revived at their miraculous contact, one sees at once that that is legend only. No ; if the prophet could not raise the dead in his own lifetime, it is not to be granted to his mouldering remains to have such power. Death draws the final line. The soul may rise again, as our master clearly teaches, when he spoke this day of many entering the kingdom with our forefathers. The soul may rise again, but not the body when its life has gone.

CHAPTER VI.

CONQUEROR OVER DEATH.

FOUR days have gone by since I last touched this record. I could not write calmly of what had happened. I preferred to wait till all excitement had passed away, and then sit down and chronicle the wonder which we all beheld, and trembled to see.

The day after the centurion's slave had been restored, we left Capernaum, and came to Nain. We have no difficulty in passing from place to place; we are welcomed wherever we go. The fame of the Prophet of Nazareth has spread throughout all Galilee, and in every town and village we at once find hospitality; some in one house, some in another. So long as we stay we are made gladly welcome, and freely entertained. Nor does He visit any place without healing, teaching, and leaving a blessing.

As we came down the hill-side, Nain lay opposite on the gently-sloping plain. To the west was its burying-ground, full of sepulchral caves. A large number of people had, as they do often now, gradually increased our following, and accompanied us. At our head walked the master, silent and thoughtful. As we passed the cemetery on the left, another crowd issued from the town gate, coming towards us. It was a funeral procession. First came the bier, borne of four, next the chief mourner, whom we now saw was a woman, in deepest grief. The women with her, wept and wailed aloud. Their sorrow seemed more real and sympathetic than such mourning usually is, with our loud demonstrations at these times, always distasteful to me; I have never liked them. But she walked like one in a dream, her face buried in her hands, careless whither she went, while sobs from the very depth of a heart bursting with anguished bereavement shook her whole frame. I have looked on grief often with untouched feelings, yet I pitied her.

'It is Rachel, of Nain,' muttered one near me. 'I know her. Poor one, when I left Nain

three days ago, I knew her son was very sick. It must be he. She loved him dearly. He was all she had in this world.'

'She is a widow, then?' I said. 'A widow twenty years,' he answered me. 'When her husband died she was left with this one child, just two months old. She brought him up with tenderest care and love, and he has well repaid it; a better son was never known than he. May the blessing of our great God be upon the lonely woman. I will go and see her to-morrow and send her help; I fear she will be in want now, he was her support.'

'She will not lack for friends, I think. How large her following is,' I said; 'I have not seen so great a gathering since Ephraim of Hebron was carried to his grave.'

'She is well known and loved,' he replied. 'Many have come to testify their sorrow at her heavy loss. But see, what doth the Prophet mean to do. Look, Judas, look!'

Jesus of Nazareth had raised his hand, as if to stop the funeral procession. They understood not, and pursued their way, now passing by him. Then he touched the weeping mother,

rousing her from her stupor of grief. She looked at him with a bewildered, wondering glance, as he said softly to her, 'Weep not.'

Weep not! Strange words. Surely he would not forbid her natural feelings of sorrow. Or what comfort would he, could he, give, even he, which on that first day of loss would be enough to dry her tears. We were soon to know. Without another word he turned from her, and, with the eager, astonished looks of all there pursuing him, followed the bearers of the bier.

He laid his hand upon it, and they who carried it stood still. They could no longer mistake his wish, nor did I his meaning. He was about to show his utmost powers, his mightiest strength. He would pluck the prey from death itself. What confidence this man must have, I thought, what sure reliance on his God! Now, has he gone too far? are not the keys of life and death with God alone? And as I mused thus, watching him close the while, he spake these words—

'Young man, I say to thee, Arise.'

How can I write what happened next. I

see it all before me now; shall I ever forget it. Amidst the hushed silence which prevailed, before the eager eyes of all, death yielded up his latest victim.

I saw the body quiver in its swathing-bands; then one of the bearers hastily snatched the napkin from the face and gazed upon it, to see if, indeed, life was returning to its frame. I had pressed forward close to the master and saw it all. The eyelids trembled, then they opened, and a faint colour came into the countenance. With looks of terror, the bearers quickly lowered the bier to the ground and loosed the wrappings and the winding-sheet. A sigh came from the youth, and with a feeble effort he raised himself and sat upright on his bier. None touched him now, all feared. He looked around with an uncertain gaze, like one just waked from sleep; then his lips moved and said, 'Where am I, friends? What is it that you do?'

But as he said the last words his wandering eyes fell upon his mother, standing near. She held her breath, she clasped her hands across her bosom; she scarce had realised it all as yet.

But when he saw her he strove to rise. Then Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him and led him to her arms.

All drew away from them and looked no more towards where they stood. We felt that meeting was too sacred for our eyes. The widow had regained her only child. Once more had God given her a son ; He had compassion on her lonely lot, and through His servant had shown pitying power.

Then rapidly the crowd broke up to bear the news. They told it everywhere. We found afterwards how it had spread with marvellous speed to all the towns in Galilee, down through Samaria, and even reached Jerusalem. Few doubted, nearly all believed ; and the conviction went abroad 'that a great Prophet had risen up amongst them, and that God had visited his people.'

That evening I heard Simon, son of Jona, use a new word in speaking to our master. He called him 'Lord.' Nor did Jesus refuse the title. The others took it up, and now it is our common phrase. And he has rightly earned it ; for as I understand the term, it is an higher

honour than Rabbi, and since he showed himself that day a Lord of life and death, greater than any Rabbi ever known, it is meet he should be thus distinguished over them.

Now let me think a while, and see what I have learned from this.

First, his compassion. Hitherto he has never denied a request; he has healed the sick, cleansed the leper, when they prayed him. But that day, his pity moved him first, without being supplicated. This shows a tender, far-reaching love.

And next, his power. That we had seen before. He has cured diseases with a touch, banished the leprosy, which is incurable (save by him). I beheld for myself the draught of fishes on the lake; and Andrew tells me that in the synagogue one Sabbath-day, before I came to him, he drove a devil from a poor, tormented man. All this shows power beyond the sons of men. But now to raise the dead! It is most marvellous. I saw the corpse myself, I cannot doubt that 'the spirit had returned to God who gave it,' as saith Ecclesiastes; and

yet that spirit came back at *his* word! There is no limit to such mighty working.

I must now believe the records of Elijah and Elisha. I doubted hitherto, and, as I thought, with good cause ; but I am not one to doubt when proof is given. That is not wisdom ; it is obstinate folly. I have seen myself that God our Father can use one of his servants even for deeds like this ; therefore I do believe our ancient Scriptures.

Another question comes. Can he transfer this power? Does it reside in him alone? Or could he give to me, Judas of Kerioth, the ability to heal the sick, cleanse the leprous, cast out devils? And if so, will he do it? It may be that he will have need of us to help him in his work. Twelve, scattered, could do more than one. Such armed authority would be dear to me. What might not a man do? to what might he not rise? who could work such deeds. Is this the beginning of the throne?

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The day following a strange event occurred. As the Lord was ministering, preaching, and

healing (for the people bring their sick in numbers to him now each day), three men drew nigh, sent by John the Baptist. They came with a message, a question from their master, 'Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?'

'Then John, too, knows of him,' I whispered to the young disciple, Lebbaeus, who stood near me.

'Art thou so ignorant?' he replied. 'Knowest thou not the baptism of the Lord by John, beside the Jordan? Nor how John at first refused, declaring himself unworthy? Nor of the voice which spake from heaven, like a thunder peal? Nor of the glittering radiance, more dazzling than the sun, which streamed down upon the master?'

'Nay, I have heard none of these things,' I answered. 'Remember that I first joined our band but lately, and knew but little of him till then; I was the last one called. And, therefore, did I wonder, not knowing all this, that the captive John, from his fortress prison of Makor, should have sent to him with question so strange.'

'Not strange,' Lebbaeus said. 'I see thou knowest it not; so listen. John but prepared the way for one far mightier than himself. The rulers at Jerusalem sent to him to ask, "Art thou the Christ?" And he replied, "I am not, nor Elias, nor that looked-for prophet." "Who art thou, then?" they said. "The voice of one that crieth in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, as saith Esaias." And the next day following this happened. I was not there myself, but Andrew, John's disciple, told me all I speak to thee.'

'Andrew, John's disciple?' I asked, with much surprise. 'That Andrew who is with us now?'

'Even so,' Lebbaeus said. 'Andrew himself would tell thee that he left John (in no unfriendly spirit) to follow Jesus of Nazareth. But let me end the tale. The next day Jesus came; and, looking on him as he drew nigh, John saith, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which taketh place before me, because he was before me. And I knew him not, but that he should

be made manifest to Israel; for this cause came I baptizing with water. I beheld the Spirit descending as a dove from heaven, and it remained upon him. And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me: 'Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining upon him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."'

'The Son of God,' I repeated. 'Is this no mortal being, no son of man, like we ourselves are?'

'Let us not talk more now,' said Lebbaeus. 'I would watch the Lord. We lodge together, as thou knowest. This evening I will tell thee all I know.'

Meantime the master, instead of answering John's messengers, bade them remain with him awhile. And in that time they saw him give sight unto the blind, cause the lame to walk, open the ears of the deaf. Then said he: 'Go and tell John what you have heard and seen. And blessed is he who shall not

be offended in me.' And they went their way.

We saw his meaning in the words. He would let his actions speak more strongly than his own assurance. Besides, they were told by us how he had raised the widow's son, and that he preached his Gospel to the poor, unlike the Pharisees and Sadducees. We reminded them too how their master, John, had done no miracle, great though he was; but that ours was mighty, both in word and deed. After they left the Lord praised John before the multitude. 'Verily I say to you, among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist,' he saith, 'and if ye will receive him, this is Elias, which was to come.'

Some of the Pharisees were standing near, and they dissented from his words. 'We know not whether to hold John for a true prophet, or no,' they said. 'We would have been baptized by him, but he denounced us with abuse; we, who would teach the law in all its strictness, honouring God.'

And then the Lord asked them in righteous

scorn, with whom would they be satisfied as a teacher? None could please them; they were like peevish children, who would join in no game of their playfellows. They objected to the severe and self-denying life of John; and when the Lord came amongst them as other men, refusing not their invitations to their feasts, they then denounced him as a glutton and wine lover. 'But thou, Capernaum, and thou Bethsaida, thou, too, Chorazin, woe to ye all,' he cried, 'because ye repent not, spite of the mighty works and deeds which have been done in you. Had I done such in Tyre and Sidon, cities of the Gentiles, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Nay, had such works and deeds been done in wicked Sodom, it would have repented too. It shall be more tolerable, I say, in the day of judgment for Tyre, for Sidon; yea, even for guilty Sodom, than for you.'

CHAPTER VII.

DAWNING LIGHT.

THAT same evening Lebbaeus brought Andrew to our room.

'Andrew can tell thee more than I,' he said. 'And it is fitting thou shouldst know as much as do the others.'

I was glad of this. For even in the short time I had been with them, I could not fail to see something as strange as unpleasing. When I first noticed it I thought I must be wrong, and that my own proud, reserved nature magnified what scarcely did exist. Though of the number of our band, I was hardly one of them! They spake courteously to me, there was never open unkindness, but I saw too plainly to doubt that all the others were not so brother-like to me as to each other. They sometimes spake earnestly among themselves, and ceased when I drew nigh.

Why should this be? What had I done to prove myself unworthy? I had been grieved to see it, nay, angered, but I kept it to myself. For it scarcely amounted to aught that I could reproach them with, there was not enough for that. It was more a feeling unexpressed than any real show of enmity. It seemed—I know not how to find the words—a kind of instinct, keeping them away from close communion with me. 'Well,' thought I, 'I must be content and wait.' It shall not be so always, they shall prove I can be true and faithful to our common cause as they.

Was it because I am the only one from southern Palestine, of Judea, while they are all Galileans? That can scarce be.

Was it because the Lord himself appeared to hesitate one moment, and it seemed as if his mind misgave him, when he called me last of all? But I had naught to do with that, it was no fault of mine. And since he did then call me for his own disciple, they should not complain. He hath been ever kind to me, though once or twice I saw him bend his gaze

upon my face with a strange, thoughtful look, I know not why.

Meantime the others sat down, and Lebbaeus spake.

'This day Judas asked of me who the Lord could be? whether a son of man, as thou and I art, Andrew, or not of woman born.'

'Of woman born, most surely,' Andrew said. 'Mary of Nazareth, the mother of the Lord, still lives. Joseph, her husband, died some years ago. Brothers or sisters he has none. But ask not that, it profits not so much as this—is he Messiah?'

'Messiah!' I cried in wonderment. 'He who is prophesied; who shall deliver us, God's people, from their foes; he who shall make our nation once more free, and break the Roman chain?'

'Even so,' Andrew answered me. 'Now, listen, Judas.'

'When we passed through Samaria, coming north to Galilee, we halted at Sychar; thou knowest our father Jacob's well is there. Our master, wearied, rested by the well, while we went to buy food. As we returned we saw

him talking to a woman, and we marvelled, but dared not question why he did so. Soon she left him, and hastened to the town, bringing many back with her. They heard him, and reverenced him; they prayed him to remain a little while. Two days we stayed there. In that time I heard from the very lips of the woman what converse had passed between them. He revealed to her her past life, and then she knew he was a prophet. But he told her more than that. For when she said to him, "I know that Messias cometh (which is called Christ), when he is come he will declare unto us all things," the Lord made solemn answer, "I that speak to thee, am he."'

We sat silent for a while. Through my mind there flashed a glorious prospect. I saw it all now. This mighty prophet, this Lord, with power which no man or men could successfully oppose, *he* could be our second Maccabæus. That man who could triumph over diseases, devils, nay, even death itself, could wither all his enemies with a word, a glance. Rome's armies would be helpless against such a

foe, even as the host of Sennacherib perished in one night. And then, when Cæsar had at last recognised he *must* give way, that one far mightier than himself was here, Palestine would hail its deliverer, the aliens would be banished, and our land our own again, portioned out in its ancient tribal provinces. And over each of these (but under him, our head) a prince, a governor, the twelve who cast their lot with him before he rose in power, Judas of Kerioth one of them.

I raised my head, and saw the others watching me with keenest penetrating look.

'Then he is Messiah,' I said.

'Yes, for he is incapable of untruth. Such a holy, sacred man of God as he, can neither lie nor be self-deceived. Besides, he can foretell the future order of events. He hath the prophet's gifts. He is Messiah, truly.'

Once more we pondered silently. Then Lebbaeus asked:

'How soon will he make himself known? When will he proclaim himself, and drive the Romans from our coasts?'

'In his own time, doubtless,' Andrew said.

'That is for him to appoint. He knoweth the fitting time, be sure. He hath as yet shown no open hostility towards their rule. And, Judas of Kerioth, we must beware we tell it not. We know it, we know it from himself, but we must trust him for the rest.'

'Yet he told it to the woman of Sychar,' I said. 'Surely it would have spread from her already?'

'It does not seem so,' Andrew answered. 'I heard nothing of it in their town. They thought more of him as a prophet than the Deliverer of Israel. They are the mixed race, remember; they are not of the pure stock of Abraham like us. They care not so much for our country's hope, half-pagans as they are.'

'And so Jesus of Nazareth is the great looked-for Redeemer,' I mused aloud; 'the cherished expectation of our race. Who could have thought that from despised Nazareth should have arisen one so mighty!'

'Nay, thou art wrong,' Lebbaeus eagerly broke in. 'The Lord was nurtured and brought up at Nazareth, but he was born at Bethlehem. And thou must recollect what saith the pro-

phet Micah: "But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." That saying is fulfilled in our master. He hath declared himself to be the Messiah, and he was born at Bethlehem.'

'Then, too,' said Andrew, 'John called him Christ. He said to his own disciples, when they complained to him that men were flocking to Jesus of Nazareth, forsaking him, the Baptist, "He must increase, but I must decrease. Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him." Christ and Messiah mean the same, in Greek and Hebrew, as thou mayest know. True, John spake in our commonly-used Aramaic dialect, yet then he used the Greek word "Christ." Therefore he called him Messiah. Both by his own declaration, and by that of John, and also by the prophecy of Micah agreeing with his birth, we see his conquering mission clearly shown.'

'And shall we live to see that glorious

work completed? Shall we be sharers of his triumph, and receive part of the reward?' I asked them.

'I surely think it,' Andrew said. 'Hath he not chosen us to help him in his sacred task? I fear not that. I fear lest we should be tempted to forsake him if danger, difficulty, or failure seem to come. I say *seem* to come, for they could not prevail and conquer such an one so endued with power from God on High. But they might shake the weak allegiance of any who were not his truly faithful servants. Let us look to it that no one of us fail him in any hour of need.'

We spoke of other matters then; of going to Magdala next day, as was arranged. Andrew soon left us; but long after Lebbaeus slept I lay awake, thinking upon the light which had dawned on me that day. So Jesus was Messiah!

CHAPTER VIII.

'WHO STILLEST THE RAGING OF THE SEA.'

TWO months have passed since I touched this scroll. We have been journeying through the cities and villages of Galilee. We, his chosen disciples, are ever with him, and others have now joined our band. Three of them are women: Mary of Magdala, out of whom he cast seven devils, and who in deepest gratitude has followed him thenceforth; Joanna, wife of Chuza, the steward of Herod Antipas; and Susanna, a widow of Capernaum. During these two months our master has laboured at his mission of mercy without ceasing. Scarcely a day passes but he heals some ailment of the body, and never sends away the sufferer without a loving word of warning or advice. He preaches, too, sometimes in the synagogue, more often in the open air, and his parables are listened to with eagerness by all.

He seems to love this form of teaching most, and, in truth, it is very unlike the proverbial method I used to hear from Rabbi Eliakim at Kerioth ; or Isaac of Hebron. The parables of Jesus of Nazareth are striking, because they are founded on the simplest every-day facts. Some of them have dwelt in my thoughts more than others. Those of the sower and his seed : the candle under a bushel : the seed growing secretly : the wheat and tares : the mustard seed : the leaven : the hidden treasure in a field : the pearl of great price : and the draw-net, I remember well. At first we scarce knew what he meant to teach, and after we had spoken much concerning them amongst ourselves, and agreed not, we were obliged to question him. He told us of the meaning of two : the sower and his seed, and the wheat and tares. The first one was a foreshadowing of his success, of the way in which his teaching would be received ; the second pointed to the end of the world, and the separation of the children of God from the children of Satan. When he had explained these two, we found less difficulty in understanding others after.

And in these past eight weeks he hath shown us a new form of his marvellous power. We had seen him triumph over death itself; when he brought back the youth to his mother's arms at the gates of Nain; we had seen his word cleanse the leper, heal the sick, and cast forth the evil spirits; now we were saved by his command over storm and sea. So wondrous was it that though I thought nothing could increase my marvel at his powers, yet that night I felt we were indeed the followers of one, for whom no task was too great.

It was the evening of the Sabbath, and we were to return to Capernaum, being then about two miles distant from it. We were by the water's edge, and as was his custom he had taught the people from the boat; then, as the sun sank and the Sabbath ended, he stepped on shore and healed a few sick folk. Returning to the boat, he thought for a minute, and then bade us cross the lake, instead of sailing along the coast, till we reached Capernaum. With some little surprise we obeyed, and as there was a gentle breeze hoisted the sail, and

set forth. The Lord withdrew to the hinder part of our little vessel, and, resting his head upon the steersman's cushion, slept, for he was weary.

The boat was Simon's, for his father Zebedee had so far forgiven his son's desertion as to speak friendly to him once more, and had even placed the little craft at his disposal, to assist the work of Jesus when he required it. Whenever we come to the lake it is at Capernaum, ready for us; and when we go inland again, Zebedee uses it for his business. Being Simon's, therefore, it is he who commands it, and is the master when we sail. He was now at the helm steering, the Lord lying asleep beside him, John close by, and the rest of us amidships and in front. The women were not with us this time; they had returned with the people to Capernaum.

The distance across is, as I have said, about two leagues. We had barely sailed half the way when the wind began to rise, with long low moans, and the ripples on the surface of the water increased in size to small waves; the sky above us grew darker, and one of those sudden

storms which are common to this lake seemed coming on. As the boat sped faster through the waves, Simon called to James to lower the sail a little more, for we were carrying too much now. He did so, but soon had to lower it still further, for the wind increased every minute, and the waves rose higher.

'This is, in truth, a mighty storm,' muttered John to Simon, who sat watchful and with bent brow grasping the helm. 'Thinkest thou, Simon, we shall reach the further side? Or shall we run back, which seemeth safer to me?'

'There is no danger yet,' answered Simon. 'Lower the sail still more,' he called aloud; 'we must show but very little of it, just enough to keep command of the boat; without that we should drift at random.'

He had scarce spoken when, with a roar like thunder in the sky, a fierce gust came sweeping down upon us. It had changed from the quarter whence it blew heretofore, and caught us on the side. The ship heeled over till I thought we were sinking, and the water rushed aboard us. Had not the blast been as short as it was severe, we had all been over-

whelmed; but like a sudden blow it struck us and passed on, while we hastily baled out the water which nigh half filled the labouring craft. The waves were now running high, and as we mounted their steep sides and flew down (for I can use no other word) into their deep troughs between, I felt sick with fear, for I knew well that such another gust would find us worse prepared to meet it than the former one. And must we die like this, I thought. What, then, becomes of all our hopes; what of the thrones he promised us? 'Simon, John,' I cried aloud in terror, 'were it not well to wake the Lord? If he bear a charmed life, yet do not we. How can he sleep thus, through such a time; wake, wake him, or we perish.'

'Yes, yes,' the others called aloud, 'Judas is right; for hark—it comes again.'

And in the far distance, yet flying towards us with the speed of swiftest eagle, we heard the growing thunder of the gust approaching; it neared us, it was on us; once more the boat bent over as it struck us, and the waves rushed in with double volume just as Simon woke our master, and the cry burst forth from twelve

mouths as from one, 'Lord, save us, or we perish!'

Even as he lay he glanced around, and calmly said, 'Why so fearful, O ye of little faith?' Then, without haste, he rose, and, stretching forth his hand with kingly gesture of command, said to the winds, '*Peace*;' and to the waves, '*Be still.*'

And the next instant we floated on the calm, smooth water; amidst a silence of profoundest quiet. But in the distance we heard the hurricane dying away amidst the ravines at Gergesa, whither we were bound. Rapidly it sank, and all was hushed again.

But as we cleared our boat from the water lying in her still, and shipped the oars to row (for there was now not one breath of wind to fill our sail) we held our peace in awe-struck wonder. And two of Zebedee's hired men, who had come with us to bring back the boat in case we needed it no longer on the other side, whispered to each other with amazement, 'Who is this, whom even winds and sea obey?'

Then, as he lay down once more, he gently said, 'Have ye *not yet* faith?' And we were

silent, not venturing to answer him. And so we passed across the untroubled waters, beneath the calm, starlit expanse of heaven, to the land of Perea.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GERGESENE DEMONIACS.

WE passed the remainder of the night on the boat, having drawn it up close to the shore, and, after a few hours' rest, at early dawn ascended the hill-side, which led to the town of Gergesa. Scarcely had we come in sight of a collection of rock-tombs, on the summit of the first hill (which pushed out a spur into the lake, ending in a sheer cliff some ten fathoms in depth), when we heard a loud and angry yell, as of some fierce creature, and two madmen issued from the tombs, running towards us with savage gestures. One stopped, however, and remained near the caves, as if afraid to venture nearer ; the other hurried on, undismayed.

I confess that, like the other disciples, I shrank back and trembled. I knew the danger of encountering a furious madman. I knew

their strength was tenfold that of ordinary men, and that often chains had failed to hold them. We drew close to each other, and behind the Lord. We felt confidence in him ; the marvel of last night had somewhat strengthened our trust in him, but we feared to draw the maniac's attention on ourselves. Still, it was not cowardly fear, for we were ready to spring forward and assist him should he be attacked. Yet we hardly thought this would happen, for we believed his power could calm the raging, furious man as easily as the wild tempest. And so it proved.

When near Jesus, he seemed to feel the influence of our master's silent, commanding look. He hesitated, stopped, and flung himself on his knees with a wild cry, unlike any human voice. 'O, Son of God, what have I to do with Thee? Art Thou come hither to torment me before the time?'

Without answering the question, the Lord asked him, 'What is thy name?'

A violent spasm convulsed the sufferer, and he rolled struggling on the ground, foaming at the mouth, tearing the grass with his hands.

It seemed as if he were desperately striving to pronounce his own true name, and that the foul demon within would not suffer him. At last, while Jesus stood looking on him with compassionate pity, there burst from his lips with frenzied shriek, the incoherent cry, 'Legion, legion, we are many!' And then followed thick and fast, entreaties, earnest supplications: 'Send us not away—banish us not—drive us not from the country! Or if thou dost, suffer us to take possession of yon herd of swine; let us at least go there.'

Poor afflicted soul, I saw plainly that it was not he himself urging this prayer, but the evil spirits which held him fast, and now despairingly recognised that their cruel reign was ended. And indeed it was so; for pointing to the great herd of swine feeding on the edge of the cliff some thousand paces from us, Jesus commanded them, 'Go!'

And leaving him, with one fearful last paroxysm of terrible violence, the demons entered amongst the herd. But in wildest confusion and terror, feeling some horrible, unseen disturbing influence in their midst, perhaps

tormented with bodily pain, the panic-stricken creatures made headlong towards the cliff, and leaped into the lake. Not one remained.

We crowded around the rescued man, who lay still and motionless, without sign of life. But we raised him up, chafed his cold hands and feet, and wrapped a cloak around him. Slowly and gradually he recovered, and feebly blessed his deliverer. The other man came up also, full of gratitude. We had been so occupied in watching the scene between his more afflicted companion and our master, that we had scarcely noticed him after his first appearance, and while he kept in the background. But his whole aspect was changed, and he seemed calm and composed, yet like one suddenly awaked out of sleep, who has not collected his thoughts, and remembers the past imperfectly.

And now a great surprise was in store for us. In the distance we beheld a multitude approaching. Even already the report of this wonderful cure had spread rapidly abroad, and I, as well as the others, fully believed that the people of the district were coming to thank

Jesus of Nazareth for ridding their country of the scourge which they had vainly tried to render harmless. Yet it was not so. Drawing near, and gathering around us, they implored the master to depart and leave them. From the muttered remarks we heard, though they were not intended to reach our ears, we plainly gathered the reason. They bitterly resented the loss of the great herd of swine, the common property of the neighbourhood. Though they feared to show their anger openly in presence of one so powerful, they let it be seen that they would have none of his ministrations. And with scarce one word in reply he turned quietly towards the lake, and gave directions to cross it at once. The man who had encountered Jesus would fain have followed us and joined our band, but the Lord saw not fit to suffer him. 'Go to thy house unto thy friends,' he said, 'and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and how he had mercy on thee.' Then we embarked, and with a light breeze favouring, sailed across to Capernaum.

CHAPTER X.

THE BEGINNING OF DOUBTS.

AFTER we landed, and were walking through Capernaum to Simon's house, where the Lord purposed to abide while in the town, I was surprised to see the house of Æneas closed as we passed it. Leaving the others, I inquired at the next house when he would return, for I felt anxious. With him, the Roman usurer, I had deposited my little store, the price of my vineyards' sale, at interest. I felt I must not lose it; it was all I called my own; and who could tell what profitable uses I might yet find for it?

'He was summoned yesterday to Tiberias, by order of Herod Antipas,' was the disturbing reply I received. 'Men say he has been unfaithful to his trust, in business of the king, and that his goods, all that he hath—yea, even him-

self—will be sold to pay the debts he oweth to Herod.'

The news filled me with alarm. In that case, I knew I should lose every coin I had entrusted to his keeping. I felt I must go at once to Tiberias, and find out all I could about him. Telling Lebbaeus, whom I chanced to meet some few minutes afterwards, whither I was bound on urgent business (though not my reasons), and that I would return within three days at latest, I set off at once, and reached the city late at night.

Alas, alas! when I made inquiries next morning, I found the rumour true. I sought to see Æneas, but the guards of his prison refused me, saying the orders of the centurion were strict that no one might commune with him; yet I gathered from others that there was no doubt of his guilt; the proofs were strong, and his condemnation sure.

I tore my beard in the first anguish of grief and wrath, cast dust upon my head, and sat down weeping. May the curse of Achan cleave to him, and Gehenna be his portion in the life to come. For he has ruined me. Vain, vain

to hope for redress from Herod Antipas, or restoration of my money from that traitor's goods. All lost, lost for ever.

After a while I became more resigned, and as I rose from the ground and endeavoured to compose my disordered appearance, I became aware that a venerable old man was watching me closely, and with an appearance of something more than mere curiosity. His look was one of deep interest, and as the thought flashed across me that he might possibly be a person of influence, and able perhaps to assist me in this cruel misfortune, I saluted him.

'Peace be with thee, my son,' he answered. 'Thou seemest in trouble and distress; can I help thee? I know thee, though thou mayest not know me. Tell me thy sorrow.'

'How knowest thou me?' I respectfully asked of him.

'I have seen thee with the Prophet of Nazareth,' he replied, 'and know thee for a disciple of his. Is he captured already and his followers dispersed? I did not think it would come so soon.'

'Captured; his followers dispersed,' I said

with anger. 'What meanest thou, my father? Jesus of Nazareth hath done no wrong to any man, he is no breaker of the law, whether of Moses or the Roman code. And he hath power and might within him to defy all enemies in the glorious task which lies before him. He will never stop till he has completed it, though we, his followers, may not reveal it till the time hath come.'

'Alas, my son,' the old man said, 'thou knowest not what thou sayest. Come home with me, and lodge at my house this night. I have often wished to speak with one of the disciples of Rabbi Jesus.'

I accepted his offer, and we soon reached the old man's home. After the evening meal we had much conversation far into the night. I must record it, for it is of weighty import, though I am loth to believe his prophecy will come to pass.

'My name,' he said, 'is Isaac ben Margaloth, of the town of Chorazin. I have watched the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth with close interest, and much that he says is good. But he will fail, and fail speedily. Of that I am

sure. Pharisee, Sadducee, Herodian, are all combining against him even now. He cares not for them, he offends their prejudices; his teaching is too new, too startling, too independent, to succeed. If he would but join himself to any one of these parties in our land, and conform to them as much as possible, supporting them and yet teaching the holy wisdom which he does, he might succeed. But he cannot do that. He would weaken his position too much, he would lose the authority he has now. I can see nothing for him but a noble failure; no escape but a steadfast martyrdom.'

'I am young and you are old, my father,' I replied hastily, 'therefore I speak with reverence. But you have forgotten that our master is endued with mighty power from God. He can recall the dead to life, I myself have seen him do so; he can hush the raging of the tempest and the fury of the waves; two days ago he saved us thus. Diseases fly at his word or touch; the demons bow to his command. Is such an one as this to be easily overcome? With the breath of his mouth he would slay all his enemies, and march forward to his triumph.

Against such might as his, what are the sons of men?'

'Nay, Judas of Kerioth,' he answered me, '*you* have forgotten what manner of man it is of whom you speak. I am old, I have gathered wisdom with advancing years and whitening hair. I have learned to read men and discern their minds. Think you that such an one as he you serve, would slay men to advance his cause. I read him otherwise. These wondrous works he doeth, has one ever yet been wrought but to do good to men? When on the mountain of Kurn Hattîn he taught the people, I was there, very near to him. I marked each word, and what said he, "Love your enemies, and pray for them which persecute you, that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven." Hast thou forgotten, too, these words of his, "I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also"? And yet again, listen, Judas, for thou hast soon forgotten this word which he spake, and it is for thee and for thy brother disciples—"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for

theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for your reward is great in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." I am no disciple of thy master, Judas. I have not joined his company, but it seemeth to me that I know him better than thou dost. How sayest thou?'

But I answered no word. Fear, doubt, uncertainty, the terrible suspicion that I had been deceived, or had deceived myself, overwhelmed me and kept me silent. But no, *it could not be.* Was not there promise of a throne, twelve thrones; for each of us a princely seat and power, when he should have redeemed Israel? Did not the others share that hope with me? Were they mistaken too as well as I? But then Isaac's words—or rather, words of Christ himself, which I had heard but forgotten—'great is your reward *in heaven*,' was that the meaning of 'twelve thrones'? I longed to tell all this to Isaac, but prudence kept it back. If we were right, to tell it out beforehand would be

madness, would put Rome on her guard. No, no, I must keep silent on that point. And then again rushed back upon my mind the torturing thought, with tenfold violence, 'Have I been deceived?'

At last I spoke. 'Thou hast certainly judged him right, my father, I believe. Thou hast shown me that thou knowest more of him than I. And for that I thank thee. But I cannot, will not, believe that our master will be silenced so easily. The common people hear him gladly. They are almost ready to take him by force and make him a king. And their united strength is greater far than the power of any sect among us now.'

'And what of Cæsar?' said my host. 'Thinkest thou that Tiberius will endure a rival in his throne, in this conquered colony?'

'Jesus of Nazareth would lead our sons against the Roman eagles,' I replied; 'and with such a leader victory is sure.'

'And thy master, this gentle, loving, compassionate Rabbi, would plunge Palestine into a fierce war for his own sake? Would spread fire and sword throughout the land that he

might become its king. Never believe it, my son. He covets no crown, I can read him to better purpose than that. He seeks to lead men to purer, better ways; to teach them more of God our Father; to rise above an outward, formal worship; to bring near to him the friendless, poor, despised, fallen, as well as the rich and prosperous. He would claim a homage of love, not of subjection. Though thou art near to him, yet thou art far removed from his thoughts and wishes.'

Again I was silent, and thinking deeply over all I had just heard, I was torn with conflicting doubts. If true, it was too terrible. Better far to have remained with Zebedee and built my way to fortune, however slowly. For now I was poorer than when I left Kerioth. The accursed Roman usurer had lost me everything. And all bright hopes were gone: no throne, no wealth, no place of power, only a poor disciple of a teacher soon to fall.

We talked of many things beside, but all concerning Jesus; and the more we conversed, the deeper sank into my mind the painful thought, 'Is it indeed as Isaac says?'

When we retired to rest, it was no night of sleep for me. Through the long hours of darkness I lay thinking, and considering this new future which lay before me. I could only see one plan of action. To say nothing to the others, but watch and mark both them and the Lord; to gather from all I saw and heard if Isaac had verily spoken truth. And if he had, then—what then?

To leave Jesus of Nazareth, to forsake his service, his discipleship. It was not for that simple reward only that I joined myself to him. Nobler aims, higher views, were in my mind. Nor was there sin in holding these, even while I felt the beauty of his teaching and marvelled at his miracles. But I cannot, I will not, be content without more recompense than this; it is not in me, it is not my nature; and if this is all he offers, then must I say farewell.

Next morning I bade leave of Isaac; I thanked him for his kindly hospitality, and, downcast in spirit, returned to Capernaum.

CHAPTER XI.

DEEPENING GLOOM.

GREAT events had happened in the short time I had been absent. It was late at night when I reached Capernaum, and I was wearied and despondent; but I listened with interest while Simon Zelotes told me how, the evening I left, the Lord had healed one sick of the palsy, borne of four on to the roof of the house, and lowered through the broken ceiling, because the crowd was too great to bring him in. I did not like to hear how the Pharisees had opposed our master then, it seemed a confirmation of Isaac's words. The next day, the day of my return, Levi had made a farewell feast to his friends and brother publicans, at which Jesus and the rest of us were present. Here again he came into opposition with the Pharisees, and spoke words of scornful reproof to them. Just

as the feast was ended, a ruler of the synagogue came in haste, beseeching him to heal his daughter, at the point of death. But on the way the Lord made whole a woman who had been sick for many years, and this delayed him, and the maiden died before he reached the house. Then followed another of those greatest of his miracles, the raising of the dead. Only Simon, James, and John he suffered to go in with him into the chamber of the dead ; and there he brought her back to life once more.

Then as he left the house two blind men came to him, beseeching him, as 'Son of David,' to restore their sight. He answered not the Messianic title which they gave him (this agrees with Isaac's words), but he granted their request.

. . . . . .

We are to leave him for a while. By two and two we are to go throughout all Galilee preaching and confirming his work. Not to the Samaritans or Gentile cities, but to our own people Israel. And this power is given unto us for the time : 'Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils ; freely ye have received, freely give.' Many other directions we received ; one

to seek not gold or silver, neither carry it in our girdles. Needless was that order for me; I have none since my loss. But in all he said there was one injunction which sank mournfully into my heart and confirmed my new forebodings:

'Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves,' the Lord said. 'Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves; but beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils, and in their synagogues they will scourge you; yea, and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.

'And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end the same shall be saved.

'A disciple is not above his master, nor a servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household. But he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it, and he that findeth his life shall lose it.'

Darker and darker grew the future prospect

before me while I listened to these words ; yet my heart hardened to a fixed resolution as I heard them. Abuse, persecution, trial, death itself, these were not what I accepted discipleship for. I glanced at the countenances of the rest ; some looked perplexed, others troubled, but I could see no sign of dissatisfaction or any indications of like feelings to my own. Let it be so, let them choose their lot. I will wait a little longer and see ; it may be that this is only to try us, his followers ; it may be that the reward will be the greater in the end. I will not give up all hope yet ; it would be weary work to begin the world again, and poorer than when I left Kerioth.

Simon Zelotes is my companion on our journey. We are to set out to-morrow. I must leave thee here, my faithful record, safe in the keeping of a friend, securely sealed from curious eyes, and resume my history when I return. The sky of my fortunes has clouded over once more. Will it clear again, or deepen in gloom ?

CHAPTER XII.

'HE GAVE THEM BREAD FROM HEAVEN.'

WE had been absent nearly three months. Simon and myself were the last to return. Our journey through the part of Galilee which we were sent to, was not attended with important results. Often we had kindly welcome; at other places we found cold indifference. Once we were driven from a village, and accused of being subverters of the law. But in nearly every town the healing works we wrought were more sought after than the doctrine preached. We have left few converts behind; two only have joined us, and returned with us to Capernaum.

My comrade Simon took the foremost part throughout in preaching and in healing; his fiery nature was more suited for the work than mine. Only on three or four occasions, when

separated from him for a time, did I essay to use the gift of power the Lord entrusted to us; nor did it fail. With doubt and inward trembling I spake the words 'Be healed;' but lo! the miracle was done. And yet it seemed to me that the strong faith of the applicants did more towards their cure, than my own efforts. It was as if the absent Jesus heard and marked their prayers, and would not suffer them to go away despairing.

I find that he went up to Jerusalem while we were away; and at Bethesda's pool he worked a wondrous cure: a helpless cripple, who for eight and thirty years had lain there, hoping to be healed. But it was the Sabbath-day, and therefore he was called before the chief priests to answer for the breach of law. He justified the deed, and their rage was kindled. They drove him forth, and some conspired against his life. Therefore he left Jerusalem, and returned hither.

Here is an open breach between him and our rulers. How will it end? I know the Sanhedrim, how stern its laws and sayings are. They will not suffer opposition; they will not

endure a rival teacher long. And if he does not reconcile himself unto them in submission, and teach under their authority (that he will never do, I think), an open struggle must begin.

And what then? Failure, defeat, dispersion, death, as Isaac prophesied to me. The forces against him are too strong, unless—unless he will put forth his power in some new way, and scatter his enemies like the chaff before the wind.

But how? Not by their death. Isaac has rightly judged him there, I think. This meek and gentle man, with all his wonder-working might, would not, I feel almost sure, sacrifice one single life for his advancement. Yet *they* are not so scrupulous; they would not hesitate.

Like the sudden storms which gather over the lake of Galilee, has risen this trouble of the future. But three short months ago, and all was fair and hopeful. Then came my loss, the visit to Tiberias, the revelation of that old man's forecast, and now this rupture with the Sanhedrim.

I cannot see the end. I can only wait and watch the current of events. That I have been

deceived, perhaps deceived myself, is well-nigh certain. But such discipleship as this, and promising to end as this does, is not for me. I would have served him faithfully and truly for a just reward. I can be patient, and wait long. I am not over-eager to grasp the prize. But to labour, and endure, to take persecution, opposition—perhaps imprisonment, and even worse, without some recompense, who that valued what the world can give, would be content with such a fate? Not I, at least.

Still, I will hope. I will not leave him yet. It may be that the clouds will clear, and future days look brighter with those early hopes which led me to his feet; but if I see the signs of deepening opposition, and with them submission on his part, then, Jesus of Nazareth, farewell.

. . . . . .

Yesterday a startling piece of news was brought. Herod Antipas, who had long held John Baptist a prisoner, was caught in his own rashness; and having too hastily promised his niece, Salome, any boon she cared to ask, was unwillingly compelled to give her

forthwith the head of his captive. We hear that he granted it with deep sorrow, and that Herodias, her mother, was the contriver of this plot. But the deed is done, and I read in its tale of blood, the fate which awaits a religious reformer.

We bend our steps to Bethsaida to-morrow at the head of the lake. Jesus seeks rest and quiet for a while. Is it to withdraw himself for the present from public gaze till the times are quieter? If so, it is the first sign of prudence I have seen in him, and I hail it as such. If he will but conduct himself with care and forethought—not stir up opposition—and act discreetly, he would be secure. Then, when he had gained the support of all parties in the land, he might place himself at their head, and restore the kingdom to Israel. His own people he will not harm, I know, whether they be for him or against him. But the foreign invader, the heathen conquerors of our land, the worshippers of idols, surely he cannot take thought for them. A thousand Roman lives are not worth one of a Jew, the chosen child of God.

Courage, Judas, thou art too desponding,

and Jesus of Nazareth will yet be the long-looked-for Messiah, the Deliverer.

. . . . .

Surely never since our fathers received the manna in the wilderness did such a marvel happen as that which I now record. It was near Bethsaida. The master had been teaching the multitude, of the Kingdom of Heaven, and laying his hands on their sick. The day was well-nigh passed; evening was drawing near. We were amongst the hills, several miles from the nearest village. The crowd was vast; fully five thousand men, and a few women and children. Philip came to the Lord, saying, 'Dismiss them now, this is a desert place; let them go to the villages, buy food, and lodge.'

'They need not depart; give ye them to eat,' was his calm reply.

'Master, if we spent all our little store, two hundred denarii, it would not be a morsel for them each. Nor is there food to buy, even if we had money sufficient.'

'And we ourselves have but five cakes of bread and two small fish,' said Andrew. 'What are they amongst so many?'

Our master answered not at first; but at that moment the wailing of a child near, broke upon our hearing. The little one was hungry, wearied, frightened; nor could its mother soothe its crying with her promises. A shade of pity crossed his face, and, motioning with his hand, he said, 'Make them sit down.'

With some wonder we obeyed. Many questions were addressed to us as we ranged the crowd in seated squares; but we could not answer. When we returned to him he held the loaves and fishes in his hands, looked up to heaven, blessed, and broke them. Then, wonder of wonders, as he gave to each of us, his hands were never emptied. With our arms full of food we proceeded to the ranks of waiting men, distributing to them and returning for more, till all were satisfied. The women and children were grouped near to Jesus, and Lebbaeus fed them first of all.

And then when it was done and we had filled twelve baskets with the fragments left, as he directed, they spoke eagerly and rapidly amongst themselves, pointing frequently to him. Their murmuring voices swelled into one loud

cry: 'Our king, our king! let us to Jerusalem with him for leader. Away with Pilate! away with Herod Antipas! that murderer. Jesus of Nazareth shall be our king.'

But he would not hear them. Kindly, but firmly, he spake to the excited crowd, dismissed them, and bade us re-embark for the other side. 'I will follow you anon,' was all he said; and we rowed off from the shore, leaving him standing there.

The lake was rougher than when we had crossed before, and the wind rising fast; no moon or stars were seen. Soon we were forced to strike the sail and make our way with the oars. We relieved each other in turn, and laboured slowly through the ever-increasing waves. Fiercer grew the storm; higher rose the sea. How long we had toiled on I know not; how far we had rowed I cannot tell. John said we were but half-way across when we first caught sight of one, whom we never expected to see in such a place at such a time. For the mass of driving clouds parted, as is often so in a storm, and the cold, clear moonlight poured a flood of light upon the heaving

waves. Lo! there stood the master very near. We had been speaking of him just before, recalling how he had calmed the tossing lake in such a night as this, and we had longed for his presence and power amongst us. But now that he appeared in this way, so unexpectedly, so marvellously, we did not think at first it could be he, and judged it rather for an evil spirit. Some cried aloud for fear, and others cowered down in the boat and called upon his name for help. Then across the water came the well-known voice, 'It is I; be not afraid.'

'Is it indeed the Lord?' we asked each other in doubtful whispers, glancing at the figure, which, like a white spectre, seemed to draw nearer and nearer to us. Though whether it was moving, or only our boat drifting along with wind and wave, we could not tell.

'It is, it is! how can ye doubt?' cried Peter, as a brighter gleam of moonlight fell on the face, and showed us the calm, assuring smile of him we knew so well. 'See,' he cried again; 'even I myself will show you it is Christ. Lord, if it be thou, bid me come to thee.'

'Come,' was the master's answer.

We held our breath in terrified suspense as our rash brother swung himself over the side of the labouring vessel. I looked to see him plunge beneath the water, deep, deep down. But no; the yielding waves seemed firm as the temple pavement beneath his feet, and he pressed on to meet Jesus.

Ah, only for one moment. Then came a roar like mighty thunder across the lake, and the furious wind tore across the expanse of water in the fiercest gust we had yet experienced that night. It cut the tops of the high waves and carried sheets of blinding foam away into the distance. Our boat heeled over till I thought we must be lost; but even in that moment of peril for us all I heard the panic-stricken man cry in despair, 'Lord, save me;' and he began to sink.

But rescue was at hand; for him, for us. The master's arm was stretched to save him; the raging storm once more was calmed for us. And as we welcomed him, adored him, with reverent love, we found ourselves close to the shore, floating in still water, and a night of peaceful beauty over head.

Now when I came to think of this in quiet after time, I thought at first we must have been deceived. That Jesus was not really walking on the waves; that he was on the shore close to their edge; and we were ignorant, because of the darkness and tempest, that we had rowed so far.

But even if this had been so, still a difficulty remains. *How did he reach the opposite shore so soon?* No man could walk around the shores of Lake Tiberias in the time. It is impossible; the distance utterly forbids it. Therefore he must have walked upon the sea; and what we said before is now confirmed. 'Even the winds and waves obey him.'

CHAPTER XIII.

'ONE OF YOU IS A DEVIL.'

HE suspects me; he has read my thoughts and shown that he distrusts me. The brethren knew not what he meant; but I failed not to understand his words. Had we been alone together, he and I; had he named me when he uttered it, it could not have been more plainly said. 'Have I not chosen you twelve? *and one of you is a devil.*'

It was the Sabbath after that wondrous rescue of Peter, when the tossing waves were closing over him, and the hand of Jesus saved him at his cry. The master and ourselves were in the synagogue; and the Jews were questioning him. Many difficult and dark sayings fell from his lips: words that even we could not comprehend—promises that he would give his flesh and blood for us to feed upon,

and the like. Outside the synagogue, when he had ended, some who had lately joined our number left at once, murmuring and dissatisfied, declaring they could no longer follow such a Rabbi—one who spake such hard sayings. Then, with some touch of sorrow, he said to us, 'Will ye also go away?'

For a moment there was silence. Each seemed to wait for another to speak. But Simon kneeled before him, and said, with low voice and trustful look:

'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe, and are sure thou art the Holy One of God.'

Should not this have satisfied our master? Simon spake for all of us; he was our mouthpiece; we denied not his words. Yet Jesus did not seem even to hear the answer, for with downcast eyes and sadness in his voice, he said: 'Have not I chosen you twelve? and one of you is a devil.'

Which one? He could not mean the son of Jona, always first in reverence and admission of his claims; nor John, who loves him as a brother; James, the other son of Zebedee,

Philip and Andrew, Didymus, Simon Zelotes, Matthew the publican, Nathanael, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus; not one of these has shown any sign of murmuring or discontent; not one has given any cause for such a word. It is I against whom his reproach was aimed; I whose secret thoughts he has discerned. Once, I remember, he said he knew what was in man. Can he indeed read secret thoughts, the inward musings of the heart? No, no, it is not that; he is but a close observer of character—no more. And though I thought none knew my bitter disappointment, my threatened hopes, yet he has discovered them; and, what is more, has shown me *that he knows.*

'Will ye also go away?' Such was his question.

'Will ye also go away?' How the words keep ringing in my ears.

Shall I leave him now? I fear, I fear that nothing is to be gained from his service; I have been deceived; he never meant to be our king; he never meant to make us what I hoped —princes in Israel.

And I have lost all—all my little store in his service. I must begin life again, poorer than when I met him. It shall not be; it is not right; it is not just.

I have no heart to write more now; I must lay this roll aside. Yet stay, one thought has flashed across my mind: I will not leave him poorer than I came; *some way may show itself of gaining money in his service.* Did not Gehazi, servant of Elisha, make rich gain?

Yes. And did not Naaman's leprosy come on him for unrighteous riches?

But Jesus of Nazareth is not Elisha. He would not curse a follower of his with leprosy. No; he would heal him rather. I need not fear; I will not go away; I will wait; wait a little longer, and watch my time. A servant of so great a prophet surely can make gain.

CHAPTER XIV.

SIMON'S CONFESSION.

ISAAC was right indeed. The storms are gathering round us. At first Jesus of Nazareth was loved by most, marvelled at by all. Now the Scribes and Pharisees are set against him with unceasing enmity. He and they are constantly at strife. He spares them not; but sometimes with stern words, at other times with deep irony, points out their many faults. He is weakening their power and authority over the people. This cannot last long; and they see it too. They watch him closely, dog his footsteps; ever waiting to accuse him. Sometimes they attack him openly; often they charge us, his disciples, with breaches of the law; but still their charge is aimed at him. And though I love him no longer now (that word 'Devil' is enough to banish every kindly feeling), yet I

must admire his faithfulness to us. Never does he suffer us to be attacked by them without his ready help. Instantly he takes up our cause, and reproves them from the Scriptures, or from the justice of the case. We are safe while he is with us. But should they once resolve to crush him (as they will do soon, I feel it), what should we be then? As sheep without a shepherd—helpless; at the mercy of the wolves. Our fate would follow soon; they would not spare us, his disciples, long.

Some months have passed away since last I wrote my thoughts upon this roll. I had no heart to do so; and small time. We left Galilee, and journeyed further north, through Syro-Phœnicia and Gaulanitis. Many miracles were wrought by him there; but I care not to record them now. His mighty works have lost their interest for me; I live no longer in the present, but in the future: our dark, uncertain future.

He had asked us whom the people said he was. Now we had often heard them speaking to each other, and we knew their thoughts. Therefore we told him. Some thought he was

our long-expected Messiah come at last, but the Pharisees had made them doubt that; and many were the different thoughts of men. Some said he was Elias come back again in living person, as Malachi had foretold; others that he was John the Baptist, risen, in very truth, from the dead; and some that he was no more than a new great prophet, born of Joseph and Mary. As we spake these words, I watched his countenance (as I so often do, more than the rest) and saw a gathering sadness overspread it. Then he asked again, 'But whom say *ye* that I am?'

'Thou art the Christ, Son of the living God,' replied Simon.

'Blessed, blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona,' said Jesus. 'For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And I say unto thee that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. Unto thee will I give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on

earth shall be loosed in heaven. And I charge ye all, tell no man that I am the Anointed One of God.'

It was all strange and mysterious to our ears. I, for my part, understood him not. What had all this to do with the throne of Israel, the conqueror of our oppressors? This had no share or part in the Deliverer's work. But before we could question him he continued—

'For, behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man must suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes; and they shall slay him. But the third day he shall rise again.'

'Be that far from thee, Lord,' said the son of Jona. 'Nay, this shall not happen unto thee.'

But as he, in his eagerness, laid hold of Jesus's arm while he spake, the master shook him off, and sternly bade him fall back as one who tempted him to renounce a chosen path of duty. 'Thou art an offence to me, Simon, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things of men.'

Then, speaking to us all in grave and solemn tones, 'If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever would save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it.'

Did the inward dissatisfaction which I so keenly felt, betray itself in my looks? I think not. But as if it had done so, and as if answering my secret thoughts—speaking more to *me* than to the rest—Jesus went on to say: 'For what shall a man be profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. And of a truth I say unto you, there be some of them which stand here who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.'

These last words were clearer, and more re-assuring. He would then come in a kingly state; he would reward each one after his works, and some of us should certainly live to

see that day. This was more after the fashion, of what I looked for; this gave me new hopes again; for, like the rest, I believed not his words which prophesied his own death. We regarded them only as the apprehensions of a noble mind foreseeing difficulties, oppositions, and ready to meet them, in pursuance of his plan—nay, shrinking not from death itself, if need be, knowing that in the living memories of those who carried on his work he would rise again.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DECISION TO BETRAY.

HIS doom is sealed. The Sanhedrim have met, and, led by Kaiapha, high priest, have decreed his death. It is no secret. When, and where, the end shall be, none know; but their meeting, and its purpose, all know.[1] For they have published their command that if any man knoweth where he is, he shall inform them; even as Ahab sought Elijah in every country, to seize and slay the prophet.

And in the face of this, once more he sets his face towards Jerusalem. This is either utter madness, or conscious strength. Which is it? I will wait a little while and see.

One thing is clear: I alone seem to be doubtful of the issue. The others fix their thoughts on nothing but a fast-approaching triumph. Again he has told us of what awaits

[1] See St. John, xi. 57.

him at Jerusalem: his sufferings, persecution, death. Nay, more than this, he named the dreadful death they would inflict on him; and it was—Crucifixion. This is hard to believe; and so little did my brethren heed it, that the sons of Zebedee asked him the next day for the right and left hand seats by his Messiah's throne. Great was our indignation when we heard it. What have they done for him more than we, that they should ask such high rewards?

Now we are near Jerusalem. I feel the end is near. Either his plans are ripe, and one week will see their grand fulfilment, or—we have been most terribly deceived, and he whom we trusted should deliver Israel, will prove to be no more than another martyr prophet with a failing mission, an unfinished work. Patience, Judas, for a few more days.

. . . . . .

We passed through Jericho, where the tax-gatherer, Zacchæus, hospitably entertained us, and declared himself a servant of our master's henceforth. Marvellous is the power which Jesus of Nazareth wields over the consciences of men.

Yielding to some sudden conviction, the publican of Jericho sprang to his feet in the midst of the feast he had spread for us, and declared before the Lord that henceforward his life was changed. 'The half of my goods will I give to the poor; and if I have exacted aught beyond the lawful tribute from any man, I will restore it fourfold.'

And this was the chief officer over the Jericho district, with unusual opportunities for gain, receiving all the taxes of the palms and balsam! How many would have envied him the post; and at a few words from a prophet he renounces all except the scanty profits of his contract! Fool!

From Jericho we came to Bethany, to the house of Martha, widow of Simon the leper. Her sister Mary and the brother Lazarus (whom our master called from the grave after a four days' sleep of death—a mighty miracle indeed) live with her. Many from Jerusalem came to see, and hear the words of Jesus as he sat at meat, and thronged the room, unforbidden by our hostess.

But ere the meal was ended, the younger

sister made an offering as uncalled for as it was sinful. For foolish waste is ever sinful, and this tribute was not needed. Bringing forth a small marble vase, she brake it, and the delicate perfume of the Indian ointment it contained spread its sweet odour over the room. Then, with her woman's gentle touch, she anointed the head and feet of our reclining master, and returned to her seat. We all sat silent, watching her act of homage; all save one—I myself.

For the righteous scorn I felt within me burned like fire, and I could not be restrained. I called it, that which in very truth it was, waste, unworthy waste; precious gifts squandered to no sufficient purpose. Three hundred pence might have been added to our little store (fast dwindling now) by the sale of that rare and costly luxury. Who could show a better right to it than we, poor followers of a poor prophet: and who amongst our little band a stronger claim than I? who have lost all for him. But a stern glance from him whom I still call master (yet for how long?) silenced the words of prudence I was uttering. 'Why

trouble you the woman? Let her alone; she hath wrought a good work upon me. The poor are always with you; me ye have not always. She is come beforehand to anoint my body to the burying.'

To the burying. Like as a flash of lightning leaps from the dark cloud and strikes with blasting power the forest oak, so did his words flash the conviction through my mind, 'Lost, lost, all lost!' For months I have struggled hard against the unwelcome truth, and though reason, probability, and events have all urged it with increasing force, hope was stronger still; but now I strive no more. It was not even his words, though they confirmed his recent sayings, that brought conviction to me. It was his manner; that spoke plainer still. The stern glance he had fixed upon me died away almost as he began to speak, and gave place to a mournful, inward certainty, and settled resignation. He sees it all before him. He has yielded in the contest with the ruling powers. He is content to seal his mission with his life.

And what becomes of us, his followers? Our turn must, *must* come next; they will not

spare us long. When the shepherd is smitten the sheep will fall an easy prey. Arrest, imprisonment, trial, death; was it for these I entered his service? Did he not expressly promise us a great reward? Were not his own words: 'Ye which have followed me in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory; ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'

Where is that promise now? Is *this* its fulfilment, an accepted defeat? a resigned submission? not even safety by flight. And does he think that we must follow him in blind obedience unto death? No, no, a thousand times, Jesus of Nazareth. Here we part for ever. I trusted thee, believed thy words, placed fullest confidence in thy promises. And how hast *thou* fulfilled thy part? Dost thou remember those words spoken to Simon's question: 'Behold, we have left all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?' What was the reply? 'Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake; who shall not receive manifold more in

this present time, and in the world to come, life eternal.'

Deceived, most bitterly deceived; and even the little which I had, all lost since I entered his service and followed him. Not even workman's wages at the last. What can I do, what shall I do, to build up the fallen fortunes of a life? how begin the world again?

For wheresoever I go, throughout the length and breadth of Palestine, I am henceforth a marked man. We, his disciples, are not safe. The Scribes and Pharisees will never rest until they have crushed out the last traces of his new school of thought and teaching; they fear it has already grown too strong. Never will they suffer his surviving followers to carry on his work. We shall be proscribed, sought for, taken, and silenced; banished at the very least. What shall I do?

Judas, what thought was that which glanced across thy mind? what was its source? who was the prompting spirit that muttered it in thine ear? Scarcely even to myself, as I sit here alone in the room assigned to me in Martha's house this night, dare I record the whis-

perings of my troubled soul. I had left the room in angry haste, where we sat at meat, after the rebuke he had directed towards me, when Mary's offering had been made. I could no longer endure his presence, as the overwhelming tide of disappointment rushed over my soul. I hated him, yes, hated him at last; I hate him now. For all my broken hopes, my shattered expectations, founded on his promises, turned former love and reverence to rage and righteous anger. What have I henceforth to do with one who has deceived me so, nay more, endangered me?

And as I paced with hasty, restless, broken steps, the slope of the Mount of Olives, whither I had wandered, knowing and caring not which way I went, as all the wild, tumultuous thoughts I have recorded jostled in my brain, there seemed a sudden silence, and the night breeze, while it murmured past my ears, shaped, as it were, a voice behind me, saying—ah, I scarce dare write it down, for once again my pulse stops as it did then; once more the blood drives back upon my heart as again I hear the words: 'Make THYSELF safe; there is a way.'

CHAPTER XVI.

'They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.'
(*Zech.* xi. 12.)

IT is done. I can scarcely tell whether I would undo to-day's work if I could, or whether I would accept their offer again were it yet unmade; but it is now too late. Even if I wished I dare not now draw back.

Yet how miserably I have failed in what I aimed at. I hoped to repair my ruined fortunes, and leave Palestine with a sum sufficient to begin life elsewhere. Never would I have consented to such a compact at such a price, so infinitely below all justice and fair dealing, but that they held me in their power. I had unwarily put myself in their hands and was helpless. There was no choice left to me. And perhaps I must admit to my own heart that my unwillingness was something lessened by the

thought: 'This shall show my power; it rests chiefly with me to silence this new teacher, to measure out to him as he hath done to me, and repay reproof with tenfold force.' For in my native village I was ever feared; as one dangerous to offend, and not slow to exact righteous vengeance.

Let me recall to-day's work; it will help me to think over the future, pregnant with great events, now very near.

Early this morning he—I cannot bring myself now to speak of him in any other way; the former names of master, prophet, Lord, have all departed with the love for him—he rose, I say, and made a public entry into our holy city. Vast crowds attended him; triumphal cries were uttered on every side as he rode onwards, seated on an ass. He passed through the streets (and all the city was aroused) straight to the Temple, which he entered like a king. First he drove the crowd of merchants, money-changers, and the like, out of the Gentiles' court, none daring to resist, although they questioned his authority in vain. Then for some hours he stayed, teaching and healing

the sick. And as the evening shades drew on he departed with the eleven, and many others following.

Whither they went I know not, for I remained behind, musing on this new event, this procession as a king. What did it mean? Was he about to declare himself as Messiah of our nation? And then my hopes, raised up again for one brief moment's space of time, were dashed once more to the earth, for I recalled his own prophetic saying to us: 'The Son of Man' (the name he loves to give himself) 'shall suffer many things of the Scribes and Pharisees, and shall be crucified.' And also that saying of the night before: 'She is come to anoint my body beforehand, *to the burying*.'

With a sigh I turned away, to seek a night's lodging at the house of an old friend, Rufus by name, a Roman soldier, but one whom I knew well, and well disposed towards me. After to-night, I thought, I can decide what next to do, where I may go. For this night I must rest; my brain is wearied, I can think no more.'

But as I moved to leave the outer court, a touch fell on my shoulder. In some fear I

looked, and saw Abiathar, a Levite of the Temple, whom I knew well in former days when we were young men together at Kerioth.

'Judas, mine old friend,' he said, 'how much longer is this imposture to continue? I have wondered that the High Priest, Scribes, and Pharisees endure this common enemy of theirs so long. And thou, too, thou wert known as a man of sense and shrewdness once. What folly induced thee to become the disciple of this Nazarean fanatic? What was the gain that weighed against such danger and profitlessness?'

'Little or none,' I answered bitterly. 'Greatly have I been deceived by him; but now mine eyes are opened. Had he fulfilled his glowing promises to us, who followed at his call, I would have cast in my lot with him right faithfully, and braved much danger for his sake—and for his reward. But he is like a broken reed, an empty dreamer; and therefore, Abiathar, I have resolved to leave him—ay, at once, and now. Even when thou touchedest me, such were my thoughts. I am no longer his disciple.'

'Verily, thou hast said well, my friend. For my purpose in seeking thee now was to try and warn thee in good time. It is no secret amongst the Temple officials that his end is very near. And not his alone, but all who join with him. This night—yes, at this hour—a council is being held upon the matter. Judas of Kerioth, the remembrance of old times, of bygone years arose before me, and I felt I could not see thee perish without one effort to save thee from a certain death. *Make thyself safe while yet there is a way.*'

The very words which floated past my ears last night as I wandered in angry, restless mood upon the hill-side of Olivet. I stood motionless for a minute, thinking deeply over what Abiathar had said.

Yes, there was indeed a way; a way of safety for myself: a way, perhaps, of much gain. 'It is no time for remorse, or shame,' I muttered. 'My wrongs, my danger, harden my heart, and justly so. I owe all this to him; how much he owes to me. *I am resolved.*'

'Farewell, Abiathar,' I said. 'I thank thee for thy kindness. I will profit by it. Farewell

now, we may meet again. Yes, I will profit by thy friendly warning, I will. I go to make myself safe ; I see the way. Farewell.'

'Farewell then, Judas,' he replied. 'Let thy flight be speedy, or it may be too late even now. Get thee to Samaria—or, no, better still, fly further northwards to Phœnicia ; there thou wilt be safe among the Gentiles.' And he turned and left me.

But I bent not my face towards Samaria, that hateful land ; nor yet to Tyre and Sidon. My journey was a short one. Through the cloisters and out by the Royal Porch I passed, and turning to the left, I reached the palace of Kaiapha. The captain of the Temple, with a guard, was at the gate. To him I addressed myself :

'I would see the High Priest at once,' I said. 'My business is of much weight ; convey me to his presence instantly, I beseech thee.'

'Art thou not one of the followers of the Nazarean prophet ?' he inquired. 'I have seen thee with him ; and of a truth thou art unwise to court further danger, as thou now askest to do. Nay, I know not whether I can suffer thee

to depart again. Thou hast placed thyself in our power; for there is a decree against thy master and all who are his disciples and friends.'

'I have no wish to depart without first seeing the Sanhedrim,' I answered him. 'I know that it is sitting now. Once more I entreat thee to conduct me to their presence. I tell thee, my business shall be thy excuse for troubling their deliberations; go, and fear not.'

'Stay here till I return. Close round him, men; but harm him not,' he added, and went in.

The soldiers drew around me to prevent escape; but that I cared not for, I had no wish to fly. Many a taunt and scornful laugh they hurled at me, foretelling my arrest and death. I said no word, I heeded not; my thoughts were busy elsewhere.

Soon the captain returned, with some surprise upon his countenance. 'They will see thee,' was his brief remark. 'Follow me.'

In silence I accompanied him through the stately marble hall until we came to a door, and entering, passed from behind a heavy curtain, and I stood before the Sanhedrim.

Never before had I seen this august and powerful assembly, whose province it is to arraign before it all matters concerning the religion of Israel, and punish offences against that divine religion, even unto death. True, their power of inflicting that last penalty of all has been taken from them some few years ago by the Romans, but they can easily procure the execution of a condemned criminal, so that they are no less feared than they were.

It was not a full assembly; there were many chairs vacant in the great semicircle of seventy-one. Looking more closely, I saw that two of its members, Nicodemus Ben Gorion and Joseph of Arimathea, were absent. I knew them both to be secretly favourable to the cause of Jesus, and the thought crossed my mind, 'They have not been summoned; they have received no formal notice of this meeting.'

But I also saw others there who were not members of the Council, yet of much authority and reverence in Jerusalem. This further confirmed a suspicion which had arisen within me that it was no regular meeting of the Sanhe-

drim, but an irregular conference, some being members, others not.

In the centre of the semicircle sat the Nasi, Hanan, son of Seth, the president; next to him Kaiapha, his son-in-law, the High Priest, but such only in name, for Hanan, the deposed, wielded the real influence in most things; on either side were men who were usually enemies, but now seemed in strange union. For Hanan, Kaiapha, and others were Sadducees, who court the favour of our Roman masters; while the Scribes, of whom I saw several present, are, as Pharisees, asserters of our national independence. This did not escape me.

The Temple captain bowed profoundly, but did not speak. There was a minute's silence, and then the harsh voice of Hanan broke the stillness, saying to the officer:

'Is this the man?'

'It is, my lord,' replied the soldier.

'Retire, my son; thou hast done well to bring him to us thus in secrecy. Retire, but wait without and keep the guard.'

The man bowed again, and left the chamber. Once more there was silence, and all

eyes were fixed on me as I stood before them.

'What is thy business here?' said the Nasi sternly. 'Thy name, thyself, thy crimes are not unknown to us; thou art a follower of the man of Nazareth, who teacheth the people many deadly errors against the law of Moses and the Temple, and revileth ourselves. What canst such an one as thou have to say to us, and wherefore hast thou sought this danger which thou surely must know thou art in now?'

Ominous words; but I had foreseen this, and trusted to turn peril into profit, else had I never sought their presence.

'I am no longer his disciple,' I answered them. 'I love him not, and greatly he hath deceived me; no longer do I call him Rabbi.'

'Fool, to think thou canst so easily deceive the wise,' cried Hanan in scorn. 'Left him, thou sayest; this very day thou wast seen and noted in his train, following in that fantastic triumph through our streets; thou wast his disciple then, thou canst not deny; marvellously rapid hath thy conversion been. Comest thou to us with such a tale?'

'I have left him,' I repeated steadily. 'For some months past I have meditated this step. It was this very day, as my lord saith, that I was in his train of followers as he rode into the holy city; but I resolved to leave him at sunset, and I have done so; for hath not he returned to Bethany with his disciples, while I am here. I love him not, and have good reason to hate him for his broken promises and my shattered hopes. Hearken now to this proof of my truthfulness. What' (I hesitated and found it hard to say on; then, with a struggle, I forced the words from my half-reluctant lips)—'what will ye give me, and I will deliver him up unto you?'

It was done. The blood rushed to my brain; there was a sound in my ears as of far-off thunder, or like the roaring of the sea; a mist seemed to settle on my eyes, and hid the Sanhedrim from my sight; then I recovered myself; it passed away, and I stood firm before them once more.

Hanan looked fixedly at me, as if still doubtful of my sincerity. He turned in his seat, and whispered eagerly to Kaiapha; the

latter seemed to approve, for he listened with much interest, and smiled and nodded in reply. The other members of the Council then left their chairs, and drew round these two, in obedience to a sign from them. They consulted for a while, then returned to their places, and Hanan spoke again.

'The Sanhedrim hath heard thy words, Judas of Kerioth, and approved them. Now listen.

'Jesus of Nazareth must die the death he has deserved. For Moses expressly saith: "And that prophet, or dreamer of dreams, *shall be put to death*, because he hath spoken revolt against the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee." Thus spake Moses, and we will obey his word. But this Nazarene hath many deluded followers, and were we to take him openly, a tumult might arise, which would be put down by the Roman cohort in Jerusalem. This must not be. We have had

more than one such riot in late years, and the Procurator, we believe, only awaits another opportunity to exercise his fullest and most tyrannical power upon the chosen people of Jehovah. Therefore we would save them—foolish and misguided as they are—both from the deadly errors of this false prophet and from the ruthless sword of Pontius Pilate. Therefore we accept thy offer. Bring this condemned man to us secretly, without noise or tumult, or else guide him to some quiet spot where he may be taken unawares; or watch his steps, and hasten to our officer when opportunity shall serve, letting him know with speed. For the disappearance of this man will cause no disturbance: men will but marvel for a little while, and then their wonder shall subside. So shalt thou do good service, and receive a reward.'

'And what shall I have?' I asked, my hopes beginning to rise high, as I saw how necessary my help was to their well-laid plan. 'What will ye give for bringing this your enemy within your power?'

'Thou canst not look for a large reward,' answered Hanan. 'Remember, thou hast been

one of them thyself, and deserved his fate and theirs. It is much that thou savest thine own forfeited life; some twenty or thirty silver shekels thou shalt have, beyond thy pardon and liberty to go free.'

'Thirty shekels of silver!' I cried in bitter scorn. 'The blood-money of a slave; no more than that! It is contemptible. I will not do it; my help is worth the sum told tenfold.'

'We can do without thy help at all,' Hanan coldly replied. 'Another of his disciples may prove more docile than thou, after thou art silenced; for remember thou art now in our power. A word from us and the Temple captain beareth thee to prison. Take wise counsel, Judas; receive the thirty shekels (for thirty it shall be, but not one more), and go thy way to do our bidding, and so save thyself.'

Betrayed on every side; deceived by Jesus; over-reached by Hanan. And, as he said, another of our number might be bought more easily, and I should then lose all, even my life. What choice was left to me?

'Let it be so,' I answered sullenly. 'Give me your wretched pay and let me go. Fear

not, I swear to guide your soldiers to him very soon. I know his haunts, and where he loves to meditate. Have your men ready day and night, well armed, and leave the rest to me.'

They called the treasurer with his bag, he counted out the sum. Then with a written safeguard from the High Priest against arrest, I left the hall.

What wrong have I done? Hath not Jesus repeatedly foretold his death? have not the Sanhedrim decreed it? They would have found the means without my help, some way or other. I should have perished with him. That, at least, I was resolved against. Why must I die? Nay, I have done no wrong.

CHAPTER XVII.

SUSPENSE.

THREE days have passed, and nothing has been done. No opportunity has offered itself for his capture in secrecy, without the danger of provoking that public tumult in his favour, that attempt to rescue him, which is the very thing the Sanhedrim would avoid.

I have watched him closely, and striven to anticipate his movements, but without success to my taskmasters. For such they are, holding me fast in their grasp, my life in their power, my own footsteps dogged, I know it. Once I thought of warning him and revealing all his danger, but my own risk stopped the words upon my mouth. For one brief moment compassion stirred my heart, I could almost have forgiven him the wrongs he hath done to me. But the next, the thoughts of his broken

promises, the danger he hath even now placed me in, the losses I have suffered in his service, all came back again. And did not Moses write, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour'? Yes, and have not our holy and venerable rabbis interpreted that to mean also, 'Thou shalt hate thine enemy'? Verily they have. And who is mine enemy if not the man who hath blasted the fair prospects of my life, when I had come from my home at Kerioth, and was a peaceful, prosperous fisherman on the Sea of Tiberias? Have not I, too, left all and followed him? What have I had in return? Therefore my heart was hardened again, and I will surely do that which I have agreed.

These past three days have been again spent in his company, and in that of my brother-disciples. On the night when I was led before the Sanhedrim, I stayed not in Jerusalem as I had purposed, but after leaving them I made my way back to Bethany, although the evening was far spent. My lingering behind the rest, my late arrival, excited no remark; for such incidents have been common during our wanderings with him. Yet have I thought that more than once

his eyes turned towards me with a grave, sad look, and more in pitying sorrow than in anger.[1] It was when he so regarded me yesterday, that the sudden impulse rose within me to tell him all, fall at his feet, implore his pardon, and entreat him to fly to Galilee or to Perea while there was yet time. And I had done it (as I have said) but that the thoughts of my own danger and my shattered hopes forced back the warning from my lips.

Can he suspect? I know not; but this I know, that now no choice is left me. Fate is too strong, and disappointment keen, revenge too sweet to be foregone.

Each of these days he has left Bethany, and going to Jerusalem, taught in the Temple. Not without opposition, both from Pharisee and Sadducee and Herodian faction. They tried to entangle him in his talk, to ensnare him into disaffection to Cæsar, to discredit his teaching

[1] See St. Matthew xxvi. 24. The 'Woe unto that man,' is not, as is usually supposed, an anathema, but, as Stier says, 'the most affecting and melting lamentation of love, which feels the woe as much as holiness requires or will admit of.'

The woe is, as in St. Matthew xxiv. 19, an expression of the deepest pity.—Farrar, *Mercy and Judgment*, p. 458.

of the resurrection, and finally to question his authority. And I could not but admire the marvellous skill with which he passed unhurt through all these dangers. No pretext did they find for seizing him, even if they wished to do so then and there. One thing I plainly see. They cannot do without my help. And after they have once secured him, and dealt with him as they will, then I will urge this in their eyes, and pray them in the name of justice to increase my reward.

CHAPTER XVIII.

'The Reward of Iniquity.'—*Acts* i. 18.

My God, my God, what have I done! Oh that the daylight had never dawned upon the hour of my birth. Oh that I had never gladdened the heart of father or mother, when it was said of me unto them, 'there is a man child born.' Again, again, with ceaseless clamour, there ringeth in my ears those awful words, once well known to me, which I learned as a child at Kerioth school, which have slumbered in my memory these many years, and now awake in tones of thunder, and as it were with gleams of fire:

'For they shall see the end of the wise, and shall not understand what God in his counsel hath decreed of him, and to what end the Lord hath set him in safety.

'They shall see him and despise him; but God shall laugh them to scorn, and they shall hereafter be a vile carcase, and a reproach among the dead for evermore.

'And when they cast up the accounts of their sins, they shall come with fear, and their own iniquities shall convince them to their face.'[1]

For I have seen it all—the end of Jesus of Nazareth; and, blinded fool, I understood not what God in his counsel had decreed of him. I despised him; but now God laugheth me to scorn, and I am but as a vile carcase that men shrink from with loathing and abhorrence, and my name shall be a reproach—yes, I foresee it all—for evermore. Yea, my own iniquity convinceth me to my face; I have sinned, I have sinned, I have betrayed innocent blood.

I cannot write it down, the awful story of the last few hours; it will be known in all its shamefulness, wherever the name of Jesus is told and honoured. Men will revere him; they will curse the mention of my name. Oh that I could blot out of my frenzied brain the memory of that last solemn Passover meal, his stern words to me, 'What thou doest, do quickly,' words which showed he knew my foul intent, but shrank not from the end; and which convinced me also there was no drawing back then

[1] Wisdom of Solomon, iv. 17, 18, 20.

from my chosen path of treacherous guilt. And then my hurried flight to the city, when with all speed I brought the soldiers to the lonely garden, which I knew he loved so well; the betraying kiss which seared my lips with fire of Gehenna; the long, long night of trial, from Hanan to Kaiapha, thence with the early dawn to Pilate, next to Herod, back once more to Pilate, forth from the judgment hall to Golgotha; oh God, may death indeed be sleep, that I may forget it and never wake again!

They have received back their price of blood. I hurled it at their feet, made vain confession of my deadly sin; ah, all too late, too late! They scoffed at me, and men drew back to let me pass, as if my garments' touch defiled them, like the leper's.

That fearful darkness ere he passed away; the thunder crash; the earthquake's panic-striking power; the rending Temple veil; the words of the centurion who guarded the scene of execution, 'Truly this was a righteous man: a Son of God,' all proved (too late) what I have done. Done to a cruel death a Son of God, greatest of men.

Only one further step remains. Life is unbearable. Gone for ever are all my former hopes and plans and labours to gain wealth or power. My only hope now left is that the dark curtain which shall so soon descend on me, may hide from me for all eternity, the knowledge of my deeds. Oh, may that death, which I now go to seek, be an unending sleep, without a bitter waking in the future!

Farewell, my secret friend; thou hast been dear to me. I leave thee in this wretched room where I lie hidden from the gaze of men. If it should chance that other hands unfold thee, other eyes peruse these lines, may they, at least, gather from thy records that Judas of Kerioth, however deeply he had sinned—sinned past the hope of pardon—knew and confessed his sin. Too late, too late!

The night is dark, the streets are still and lonely, though the Paschal moon should shine, clouds darken her face; so is my life darkened for eternity. The time is fitting; no more delay.

I go to seek swift Death: to close a life I can no longer bear.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

How strange and marvellous are the ways of God Almighty! Had the miserable wretch, whose self-recorded life has come to light, but lived three short days more, he would have seen the holy Jesus come to life and burst the bonds of death. For we, his joyful followers, have seen, have spoken with, and worshipped Him, and known Him for the Son of God, with power from Heaven. All glory to His Name.

God keep us all from such a fearful end as that of Judas, once disciple of the Lord. From hatred, and revenge, from avarice, from seeking great things for oneself, may He preserve us ever. Then shall our name be written in His Book of Life, and not like this dishonoured name of Judas, be accursed for evermore.

Eubulus,
Disciple of the Lord.

Finished, Llandudno
June 7th 1874

LONDON : PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
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